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ABSTRACT

A review of literature on year-round schooling (YRS) points to the necessity of participant involvement in the change process. This document focuses on the story of one Ontario school board's deliberations around modifying the school calendar. Following the introduction, part 1 provides a background of YRS, its claims and criticisms, and information on the consultation process. Part 2 provides examples of some Ontario school boards' experiences with YRS. Chapter 4 briefly describes the activities of four boards--York Region, Halton Region, Muskoka Board of Education, and Peel Board of Education. The fifth chapter describes a research study of the consultation process experienced by the Durham Board of Education in Ontario, which had been considering pilot projects for modifying the school calendar in some elementary schools. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis. Chapters 6 and 7 offer an analysis of the Durham policy process and the overall role of the consultation process in policy making. Suggestions for dealing with uncertainty in decision making are offered. Factors for successful consultation include a sense of purpose and ownership, a variety of alternatives, adequate expertise, a team approach, and consideration of timing and the political process. One figure is included. Part 3 contains 168 references that are listed by the following categories: the debate about YRS; organization and management issues; educational issues; community issues; and accounts of individual experiences. Appendices contain letters, financial data, and a suggested modified school year draft. (LMI)

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Changing Times, Changing Minds:

The Consultation Process in Considering Year-Round Schooling

Principal Investigator:
Joel Weiss, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

With
Jane Coryell

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A RESEARCH STUDY COMMISSIONED BY THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

INTENTIONS OF THIS REPORT

Over the past century, the *traditional* school year (September to June) is largely all that Ontario has known. Modifying the school calendar so that a school is used for an entire year constitutes a major change in a school and its community. In the field of education, extensive literature is available regarding educational changes and their implementation in schools and communities. Since sorting through the literature on school calendars, school financing and school organization, is a Herculean task, this report touches only on highlights with regard to Year-Round Schooling (YRS): (1)clarifying terms, (2) summarizing the history of and debate about YRS in North America, (3) outlining what some publications say about the consultation process in YRS. This provides the background for the major purpose of this report: the story of one Ontario school board's deliberations around modifying the school calendar. This inquiry takes as its focal point the unfolding of the consultation process employed by the board. In addition, a bibliography has been categorized at the close of the report in order to direct further readings on YRS. The discussion about the school calendar contains various terms: Traditional School Year (TSY), Year-Round Education (YRE, Modified School Year (MSY) and alternate School Calendar (ASC). For the most part, this report will use the term, Year-Round Schooling (YRS).

Because the school calendar influences many features of our lives - leisure, work, child care, social welfare programs - any attempts at change must be carefully considered. An important thread, however, does emerge from the literature on YRS: *the people whose lives are affected by educational changes must participate in the process if the changes are to be successful.*

Part One of this report includes general background on Year-Round Schooling (YRS) and the consultation process with regard to YRS.

Part Two provides concrete examples of activities with YRS of some Ontario School Boards. Chapter Four briefly describes the activities of four Boards. Chapter Five offers an extensive account of a research study of the consultation process experienced by the Durham Board of Education in Ontario, which had been considering pilot projects for modifying the school calendar in some elementary schools, and Chapters Six and Seven present interpretations and discussion of the consultation process.

The work of the Durham Board and of this report has been conducted in the light of two main pressure-points currently affecting education in Ontario. The first is the public and political perception that education can and should become more effective and efficient than it already is. The most recent call for schools to play a more integral role in current economic changes was voiced by the Economic Council of Canada in *A Lot To Learn: Education and Training in Canada* (1992). The second pressure-point is related to the first; namely, the government of Ontario recently has chosen not to increase allocation of funds to schools. The most recent reductions in the Ontario budget for school boards have led to a variety of regional cost-saving measures, including the discontinuation of some consulting positions and of some instructional programs. Increasingly, education systems must make major changes in order to accommodate changing economic times. One of those changes may entail modifications to the school calendar, possibly Year-Round Schooling.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND TO YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLING

2.1. CLARIFYING TERMS USED IN THE DISCUSSION ON YRS

Although many people rightly understand that YRS means school facilities are in use for 12 months, there are some who mistakenly believe that YRS means a student is in school for 12 months. One reason for this confusion between school use and student attendance may arise from a misunderstanding about the amount of time students spend in school in a year round school. A close reading of the Track systems on the following pages will clarify that YRS does not mean 12 months of student attendance.

School systems around the world vary in length of the school day, week and year. They also vary in how they apportion instructional time with vacation time and do not necessarily follow the standard North American school year (Kurian, 1988). Some of these calendar differences are due to such factors as geographic location or local community needs. The Canadian Education Association publishes annual reports of provincial data on school calendars which indicate that, in Canada itself, the official school year may vary from 200 days in Alberta and Quebec to 194 days in Ontario and New Brunswick and 190 in Newfoundland/Labrador. The minimum number of instructional days also varies from province to province with the Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Alberta at 190 to Quebec and Prince Edward Island at 180. For the most part, the traditional school calendar across Canada begins on the Tuesday after Labour Day Monday and closes at the end of the last full week in June. Because of the long winter nights in the Yukon, that school year does not follow the usual September-June calendar and instructional time is recorded in hours, not days. For instance, the Yukon's 950 hours of instruction in primary grades matches British Columbia and Alberta (*CEA Information Note*, May, 1992).

Recently, discussion about education has included comparisons between different countries on results of achievement tests, especially in mathematics and science. Over the last few years, interest in improving education in North America has centred on findings that higher scores are achieved in countries of the Far East, such as Japan and Korea. Part of the North American argument favouring

more time in school is the possibility that it may be directly related to more time on academic tasks which may, in turn, lead to improved test scores (Berliner, 1979; Wiley and Harnischfeger, 1974). One way, but not the only way, to increase instructional/learning time in schools is YRS.

Just as there can be confusion between "school use" and "school attendance" in YRS, there can be confusion about terms used in the discussion. To facilitate understanding of the concept and practice of Year-Round Schooling described in the rest of this report, some definitions follow.

YRS and YRE

In practice, the terms Year-Round Schooling and Year-Round Education are used almost interchangeably. Technically, however, a distinction is possible. YRS refers to the organization and management of schools; it may be implemented to solve economic problems. YRE, however, is a philosophy that learning is a life-long, continuous process best accommodated by operating schools all year.

TSY

Traditional School Year refers to the standard September-to-June calendar.

MSY

Modified School Year means that the traditional calendar of instructional and holiday times is modified without operation on a year-round basis.

ASC

Alternate School Calendar is similar to MSY

TRACK

A track is a schedule followed by a designated group of students at a year-round school.

OFF-TRACK

The time when the student is on vacation.

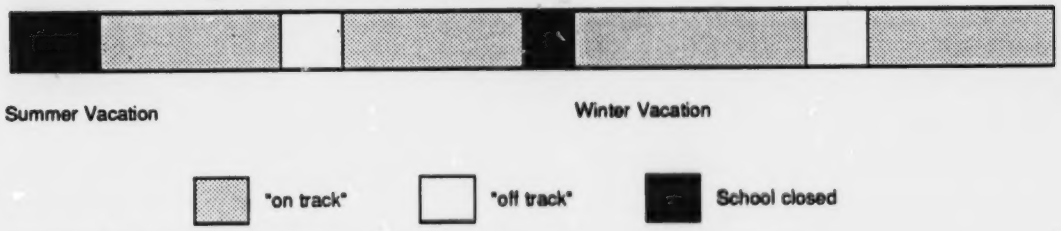
INTERSESSION

Additional instructional time offered to students who are off-track (on vacation), much as summer school is offered within the traditional school year.

SINGLE TRACK

A single track calendar model has all students in school or on vacation at the same time. Figure One presents a generic way of representing a single track.

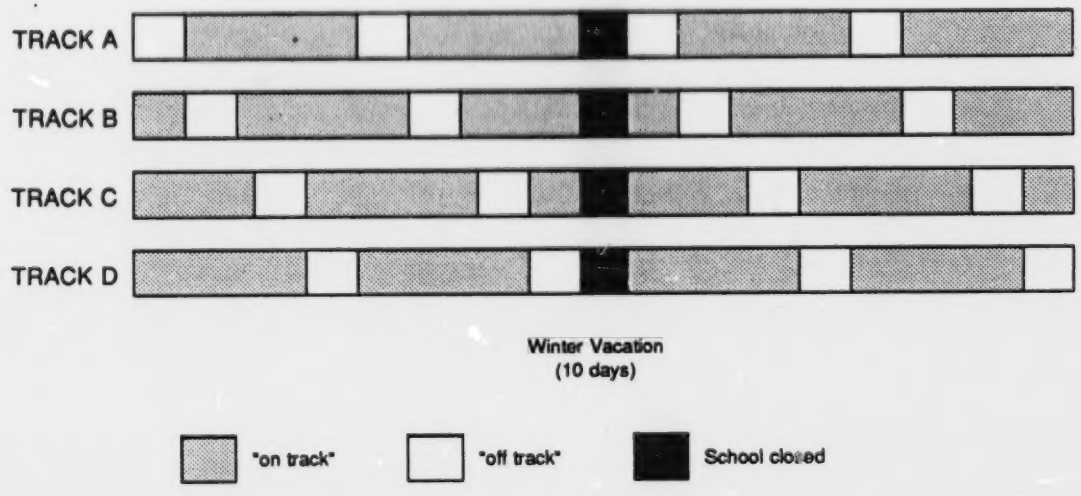
Fig 1: Year-Round Education - Typical Single Track Schedule



MULTI-TRACK

A multi-track calendar model has the student enrollment divided into groups, usually four or five. Each group has a separate schedule of school days and vacation days. Although there are several ways of scheduling multiple groups of students, we present a sample of a four track system in Figure Two.

Fig 2: Year Round Education - Typical Multi-Track Schedule



EXAMPLES OF MULTI-TRACK SCHEDULING

45/15

The most popular year-round calendar at the elementary level is the 45/15. Students attend school for nine weeks, have a three week vacation and then return for another nine weeks; the cycle continues throughout the year.

60/20

This model is similar to the 45/15 model. Students rotate through three sixty-day terms and three twenty-day vacation periods. (This plan generally seems more appropriate than the 45-day calendar for the secondary school level).

60/15

This plan borrows from both the 45/15 and 60/20 models. The instructional period is sixty days and the vacation period is fifteen days. The summer vacation period can be six weeks in length.

SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL

The school site offers both the traditional school calendar and the year-round options within the same building.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

This schedule refers to a schedule which adds on more days than the presently required number of instructional days.

EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY

The minimum school day is usually 5 to 5 1/2 hours. An extended school day adds more time to the number of hours per day. In some school districts in the United States, for example, an extended school day operates before 8 a.m. and/or after 5 p.m. because of students using the school facilities on a "shift" program. The extended day or shift is one organizational response to overcrowding conditions.

2.2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF YRS IN NORTH AMERICA

The North American history of the use of schools on a year-round basis spans almost a century. Since YRS has been fairly pervasive in the United States, this section of the report begins with a brief description of their history.

2.2.1. THE AMERICAN SCENE

The first modern year-round school calendar was introduced in Bluffton, Indiana in 1904. The voluntary program was conceived to improve learning and curriculum through individualized classes.

In the early part of the twentieth century a number of other communities offered voluntary and mandated programs. Newark, New Jersey, developed a program to help immigrants learn English and to help some students accelerate their educational progress. Omaha, Nebraska, and Nashville, Tennessee, established YRS programs to provide continuous vocational training programs and to improve the quality of education. Aliquippa and Ambridge, Pennsylvania, used a four-quarter plan to create additional space. Students rotated through twelve weeks of vacation and thirty-six weeks of instruction. The early year-round plans were viewed as successful; however, with the pressures of The Depression and The Second World War, these innovations disappeared.

In the 1950's only a few school boards re-examined the concept of YRS. The expanding school population of the American post-war years was accommodated in new school construction financed through community bond issues and tax overrides.

The reintroduction of the YRS program occurred in 1968-71 in the communities of St.Charles, Missouri; Romeville, Illinois; and Hayward, California. By 1976, some fifty-seven California school districts were using non-traditional calendars. With increasing enrollments, limited funds for portable classrooms, and dwindling financial resources, new solutions to old problems were sought. YRS was one possible answer.

Initially, school districts changed the school calendar for better utilization of space but during the 1980's, increasingly schools considered possible educational benefits and changing life styles as reasons for adopting YRS. By 1986, nineteen states offered non-traditional calendar options in 326 schools. California led the way with forty-three school districts and 141 schools. The National Association for Year-Round Education released figures in February, 1991, that indicated some 736,000 students in 872 schools in twenty-two states were enroled in some form of a YRS program. The project estimates for 1992 were for 1.3 million students in twenty-three states (Mydans, 1991).

2.2.2. THE CANADIAN PICTURE

On the Canadian scene, there has been a wide gap between interest shown in the concept of YRS and the actual number of examples in use. Between 1924 and 1931 and between 1947 and 1953 when the twin problems of growing enrollments and rising school construction costs were being experienced, a variety of plans for modifying the school calendar were considered, but not adopted.

During the heavy demand on the educational system from the early 1970's and into the 1980's, renewed interest in YRS found expression in several provincial reports; for example, the *School Year Modification Study* (Department of Education, Government of Alberta, 1971), *Committee on Year-Round use of Schools* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1972), *School Day: School Year, Draft No.2 March 1988* (Governance Group Royal Commission on Education [B.C.]), and the *Second Report of the Select Committee on Education in Ontario*. A feasibility study for the Saskatoon Public Schools was conducted in 1971 (McKague and Penner). As in previous decades, however, no implementation was forthcoming.

While a number of school boards in Canada have been studying YRS, by the end of 1991, only one school had actually implemented a modified calendar. Faced with declining enrollment and possible school closure, the principal, staff and families of the Glendale School in Williams Lake, B.C. began their implementation in September, 1991. There were, as well, occupational and geographic reasons for making the change. Many parents working in the logging industry were using April as a vacation month because summers were not available and the weather is so severe during December and January that school buses often have difficulty getting on the road. Preliminary results for the first year of implementation indicate that enrollment increased, bringing the school population to over a hundred. For the time being, the numbers warrant keeping the school open. Other school boards in British Columbia and Alberta have been exploring YRS as an alternative to the standard calendar of September to June. Alberta Education has been especially active in this area. In Ontario, the Durham Board of Education has not been the only Board interested in YRS. After recent, extensive discussions, however, boards in the York Region and Muskoka decided that piloting YRS was not appropriate for them at this time.

The complex discussions conducted by these boards of education reinforce the difficulties associated with changing traditions. Yet, regardless of decisions made in school boards against adopting YRS, there is clearly considerable interest in it as one alternative for coping with

considerations of space, accommodation, financial, educational and life-style in relation to schools. An additional indication of the interest in Ontario and the rest of Canada is the development of the Canadian Centre for Year-Round Education (CCYRE) through the auspices of the Ontario Council for Leadership in Educational Administration (OCLEA).

What has prompted current Canadian interest in YRS seems largely to be recent economic uncertainties and budgetary restraints which are challenging educational systems to improve the justification for their expenditures. In particular, for boards facing increased enrollment and inadequate facilities, requests for capital construction costs far outstrip available resources. For example, although the Durham Board 1990 requested 90 million dollars from the provincial government for capital funding they received less than 10% of that figure. Several boards in Ontario, Alberta, and other provinces are looking at alternative ways of coping with overcrowded schools, including a continuation of using portable classrooms and port-a-paks, bussing and split shifts. The most widely made choice is portables. Durham Board, for example, in 1991, had 492 portable classrooms housing 13,776 students. In some boards which keep the traditional school calendar, there are three ways in which modifications towards the YRS are already being implemented. First, some school boards have expanded summer school programs in order to accommodate special needs students, such as ESL students, developmentally challenged students, and ambitious students who attend summer school in order to 'fasttrack' through the secondary system. Second, expanded adult re-training through continuing education departments is resulting in many schools being used on an all-year basis. Third, informally, parents modify their child's time in school whenever they extend family vacation time or keep them out of school for reasons other than medical ones.

By itself, lengthening the school year does not necessarily save costs. But keeping the school open all year does accommodate more students. By shortening the summer break and adding shorter, more frequent vacations, the physical plant may be used more efficiently than the standard calendar allows. But financial savings and space considerations are not the only advantages claimed for YRS. *The Second Report of the Select Committee on Education (1989)* of the Ontario Provincial legislature originally discussed YRS as a remedy to unequal distribution of time associated with semestering. In addition to resolving management concerns regarding finances, buildings, YRS can offer advantages for teaching and learning.

The next section summarizes further claims about the advantages and disadvantages of YRS, material drawn from the wider discussions about YRS, and not necessarily from any one jurisdiction.

2.3. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE DEBATE ABOUT YRS: CLAIMS AND CRITICISMS

2.3.1. CLAIMS VOICED BY ADVOCATES OF YRS

The educational benefits most frequently mentioned in the debate on YRS are (1) increased retention of knowledge and skills; (2) increased opportunity for individualized instruction; (3) more frequent occasions to evaluate students' progress; (4) shorter and more varied units of instruction; (5) opportunities for additional enrichment or remediation during intersessions; (6) increased communication, co-operation and involvement among parents, the school and the community; (7) increased enthusiasm for "fresh starts"; (8) educational benefits to gifted, special needs, and ESL students. The more frequent rotation of instructional and vacation days may account for these benefits. Vacation periods or intersessions are available to remediate identified learning problems or to provide opportunities for enrichment. Some students can thereby avail themselves of 225 instructional days rather than 185 as is the case in Ontario. The YRS approach actualizes the philosophy that learning and education are continuous and life-long.

An unexpected benefit that appears in the debate on YRS is the improved attendance of both students and teachers in elementary and in secondary panels. Teachers use fewer sick days; students seem more enthusiastic about returning to school.

While improved education should be the primary reason for adopting a year-round calendar, there are actually some cost benefits. Multi-track YRS has proven effective in resolving overcrowded school sites because it allows schools to increase student-capacity without adding portables. Schools on single and multi-track calendars report a decrease in vandalism. With the buildings in use for more months during the year, schools seem to be a less attractive target for vandals.

Finally, proponents of YRS argue that having fewer students on vacation at any one time affords a better distribution of vacation jobs and more efficient use of recreation facilities within the community and the schools.

2.3.2. DISCLAIMERS VOICED BY CRITICS OF YRS

The most common obstacle in implementing non-traditional calendars is the very changing of a tradition. Parents, students and teachers who have no experience with YRS usually oppose changing the calendar. The change means that parents, teachers, students, and administrators, secretaries and custodians must adjust their life-styles in order to accommodate several short vacations instead of the

usual two-month summer. Modifying traditional summer activities like summer camp may be required. Teachers' custom of taking university summer courses would need adjustment. Part-time employers and employees also have adjustments to make. Some intersession vacations, furthermore, may occur during times of the year when outdoor activities are unattractive.

In addition, YRS requires greater family responsibility for planning breaks. Child care, for instance, may prove difficult during vacations. Another difficulty may arise if some members of a family are in a YRS school while others are following a traditional calendar.

YRS may raise problems with scheduling maintenance, repairs and renovations in schools. Yet another obstacle to YRS is making facilities comfortable during intense summer heat.

As for recreation, clubs, teams, bands, student governments, etc., YRS brings complications. The scheduling of interscholastic activities among YRS and traditional schools also becomes complex.

Finally, revolving schedules can create communication difficulties in ensuring that all participants are fully and clearly informed. The proponents of YRS think that these issues are answerable through careful planning, effective communication and use of appropriate personnel.

2.3.3. RESOLUTION OF THE DEBATE ABOUT YRS

There is no definitive, all-embracing resolution to the issues under debate in YRS. Much depends on educational needs of students, community needs, support and involvement, as well as on features which drive educational practice in one jurisdiction compared to another. For instance, B.C. and Ontario are not governed by provincial-wide, multiple-choice, norm-referenced achievement tests in the same way that California and Utah are. To some extent American education lends itself to a mastery learning approach, one which chunks curriculum into modules. Neither B.C., with its Education 2000 plan for individualizing education, nor Ontario, with its highly decentralized system, necessarily lends itself to such an approach.

2.3.4. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Given the claims made on both sides of the YRS debate, this section of the report includes some of the research and evaluation of individual implementations bearing on the claims. A few general observations about this literature are in order.

1. The research is American-based and thus fits with their more extensive interest and history of implementation than anything so far found in Canada.

2. Much of the literature is descriptive in nature, seen as useful for practitioners, but questionable in the research community (i.e., seen as "soft", anecdotal data). Descriptive accounts are often part of a general advocacy for YRS.

3. Some of the research on cost factors has been of the 'simulation' or 'modelling' variety, in an attempt to show relative cost savings or deficits under different scenarios, such as not building a new school ("Phantom" schools mean "phantom" budgetary projections.)

4. The research that is based on learning outcomes concerns itself with student achievement, and attitudes of staff, students and parents. There is virtually no research which addresses curriculum and instruction in YRS schools.

5. Such outcomes-based studies have been difficult to interpret in a summative way. Issues of comparability, such as the timing of the study, the specifics of the communication, the variables and instruments used, the populations sampled, are considerations which point to the lack of definitive evidence for YRS claims.

2.3.5. SPECIFIC INTERPRETATIONS

Several items in the literature provide interpretive summaries of some of the research on YRS. Recently, the Center on Evaluation, Development, Research of Phi Delta Kappa published *Year Round Schools: Do They Make A Difference* (1990) in which they stated that the research "...is inconclusive or contradictory" (p.21-23). We would like to summarize their conclusions and add our own interpretations, including some from other research summaries where appropriate.

COSTS: There can be cost savings with YRS, usually associated with the avoidance of capital construction costs for new schools. There are no cost savings associated with single track calendar, but certain multi-track options (e.g. five-tracks) offer the greatest opportunity for cost savings. This is not a guarantee, since these savings can be offset by higher operating costs, especially with the addition of air-conditioning, maintenance costs, underestimation of construction costs (e.g., inflation). Another potential off-setting cost, where YRS is implemented, is the financial incentive that is given to districts to convert to YRS. A recent study in California (Legislative Analyst's Office, 1990)

recommended that some of the year-round incentive programs be repeated since in some cases they were costing more expense of new capital construction. There is also evidence that there are considerable costs associated with converting back to traditional schools from YRS (White, 1990).

SPACE: Boards faced with serious overcrowding of facilities can find relief with YRS. However, the caveat is always that modifying the calendar is fraught with difficulties unless the appropriate planning is done.

CONSULTATION: Because the school calendar affects many other services in our society (e.g., recreation, social services, child care), any change from the standard calendar affects people and institutions. Trying to implement change is always a difficult venture and is magnified by the complexities of YRS. Clearly, successful implementation requires a grassroots consultation involving staff, parents and community at every stage of information-gathering and decision-making. Successful consultation means that people feel they have ownership of the decision, and that they have not been co-opted. It also implies the need for a full-time individual to coordinate the information-gathering, decision-making and implementing processes, all of which usually take one and a half to two years.

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT: This is perhaps the most difficult of all the issues to be addressed within YRS. The Phi Delta Kappa report (1990) suggests that YRS schools do not show great gains in academic achievement, as demonstrated by scores on standardized tests. This interpretation is consistent with that found in other research reviews on YRS (Merino, 1983; Peltier, 1991). This finding, however, needs some fine-tuning. These reviews basically claim that there is no consistent pattern except for what has become the usual finding for comparative program evaluations: that the results overall favour neither YRS nor traditional schools. However, the timing of the study reported by Phi Delta Kappa appears to have a bearing on the results. The earlier Merino review found fewer positive results than did the later Peltier article. Since the Merino study was published, there have been a number of studies reporting individual experiences with YRS: Oxnard, California; Utah; Cherry Creek, Colorado; Houston, Texas. These studies do indicate gains for students from YRS calendars in comparison with students from the traditional calendar. This positive result may be due to better research procedures and/or better implementation of YRS than in previous eras.

Further examination of studies reveals that the global results mask important findings found for different sub-groups. Results indicate (1) more significant differences in success in school for students in the lower-ability range, (2) some differences for higher-ability groups, and (3) no real differences for students in the average range. These results for the lower-ability students may be a confirmation of the claim that YRS affords better retention rates because of more frequent and shorter vacation periods. These results for higher ability groups may be a function of increased time in school through effective use of intersessions.

FEELINGS: Generally, when YRS is implemented, parents, students, and educators react positively to the change. This response has occurred even in situations where at the outset people held negative or neutral views of YRS.

ATTENDANCE: There appears to be increased attendance for both students and teachers. This result has been attributed to more frequent vacation periods, resulting in teachers needing fewer rest and recuperation times to recover from burnout, and students being eager to see school friends after short vacations. Quite possibly, more frequent vacations enable both groups to schedule dental and non-emergency medical visits more conveniently. Additionally, more frequent vacations may discourage the practice of extending Christmas and other holidays. Another aspect of attendance influenced by YRS involves secondary school dropouts.There is a decrease in dropout rates. In some cases, dropouts return to school because the modified calendar offers more opportunity to return.

VANDALISM: Evidence suggests that cutting back on long summer vacations leads to fewer acts of destruction on school property, and that students get into less trouble with legal authorities.

TEACHER REMUNERATION: In some jurisdictions, intersession periods enable teachers to earn additional money for teaching, an important consideration where salaries are low. However, if teachers do so even for two years, apparently the potential for teacher burnout increases.

SCHEDULING: In situations where multi-track schedules are used, there is a minimum number of students required to avoid split grades at the elementary level and to ensure ranges of options at the secondary level. An elementary school of 550-600 students is seen as the minimum figure whereby multi-tracking can be conveniently accommodated. At the secondary level, 2500 is a minimum number of students needed to ensure a reasonable number of options for the program.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND YRS

We have already stated that there is an extensive literature on changing and implementing educational policy. Rather than dealing in generalities, we are presenting information which was developed specifically in the area of YRS. The United States, particularly, has a long history of considering YRS, and has published considerable material written about the impact of change on different groups: such as parents, teachers, students, school administration and maintenance and community members. Three publications are tantamount to handbooks regarding the consultative process in YRS.

(1) John D. McLain, *Year-Round Education: Economic, Educational, and Sociological Factors* (Berkeley: McCutchan, 1973)

(2) Morris A. Shepard and Keith Baker, *Year-Round Schools* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1977)

(3) Association of California School Administrators, A Primer on Year-Round Education (Sacramento: A.C.S.A., 1988)

Canadian papers also give helpful information and guidance. Two are particularly helpful.

(4) Craig Roxburgh, *Year-Round Education: How to Get Started and Communication Needs*, Draft (Alberta Education, March 6, 1990) and *Year-Round Education: Some Questions and Answers* (Alberta Education, revised March 6, 1991)

The ideas presented in these publications span nearly two decades. The earlier works are just as timely as they were in their day. These five sources are summarized here in order to highlight some of the features characteristic of effective consultation surrounding YRS. We do this for two purposes. First, it provides concrete resource materials for those boards and schools considering YRS. Second, this material will be useful in understanding the consultation processes undertaken by the Durham Board and other Boards, which is the focus of the research on this project.

3.1. JOHN D. MCLAIN: *YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION* (1973)

McLain's tenth chapter, "Strategies for Implementing Change at the Local Level", provides a blueprint for a 4-step consultation process in YRS. That blueprint is still useful for today's committees and communities. He outlines the consultation process in steps typical of "any systematic approach to solving a problem" (McLain, p.167):

Feasibility Study

(1) identifying unmet needs
(2) identifying resources (available and unavailable) to meet the needs
(3) considering alternative ways the resources may be used to meet those needs
(4) selecting the most appropriate alternative

McLain stresses the necessity of sufficient information for those involved in the consultative process to decide whether YRS is appropriate and feasible in their community. In fact, YRS can be so controversial that even the feasibility study itself must be conducted under advisement. McLain warns that:

> The board of education should have some concept about the impact a feasibility study is likely to have on the community before it agrees to undertake such a study. No matter how comprehensive the effort to disseminate accurate information, there are bound to be some misinterpretations and misunderstandings. *There is no reason for a community to undergo such an experience unless the school board and administration are seriously considering year-round schooling as an alternative to the present schedule* (McLain, p.169, our italics).

Conducting The Feasibility Study

In describing the feasibility study, McLain outlines the procedures and participants most appropriate to successful consultation. Even before undertaking a study, the initiating people -whether citizens or administrators - must decide who does what, when and why. Close communication between citizens and administrators is critical.

One specific person must be responsible for the organization and management of the study. This coordinator must have the time and interest to do a thorough job and be able to work successfully with the wide variety of people who will be involved in the study and on a steering committee. The coordinator will need to be able to deal with both supporters and adversaries of YRS.

McLain recommends that this project coordinator be selected before the feasibility study is conducted. Responsibilities and authority of the coordinator must be carefully defined. The membership of the steering committee should, if possible, include voices from the teachers' association (union), parent-teachers' association, student association, chamber of commerce, local industry, the press, and any other groups significant to the community. (Unfortunately, McLain does not offer details about how to recruit those "voices".) But the actual selection of committee members will depend on those involved. The key factor is the degree of *representativeness* of the voices added to school voices on the steering committee.

Funding is desirable for the steering committee and its subcommittees. But clearly defined goals, responsibilities, relationships, procedures and authority are vital. McLain further advises informing the press but avoiding public hearings or opinion surveys in advance of the feasibility study which, itself, will employ such measures.

Each of McLain's steps receives his detailed description and advice. They are summarized here as integral to the consultative process.

Step 1: Identifying Unmet Needs

a) define needs or problems to be analyzed in terms of "economic efficiency, quality education, and compatibility with changing life-styles" (McLain, p.172)

b) subcommittees for each of these three aspects may be formed to consider the needs of the particular community

c) each problem/need identified should be examined in these facets:

(i) What is the most accurate definition of the problem?
- What is the intrinsic importance of the problem?
- At what rate is the problem increasing in magnitude and/or intensity?

(ii) What causes the problem?

(iii) What are the effects of the problem?
- What harm is being done by failing to solve it?
- To what extent is the damage irreversible if immediate action is not taken?
- What individuals or groups are most directly affected by the problem?

(McLain, pp.172-3)

Step 2: Identifying Available Resources

a) identify available resources useful in solving each identified problem
b) identify constraints or conditions on using the available resources

Step 3: Considering Alternative Uses of Resources

a) creativity and inventiveness must be applied to finding alternative resources useful in resolving problems

Step 4: Selecting the Most Appropriate Alternative

a) Once the most appropriate solution has been selected, the steering committee needs to "build credibility with the groups of people who will be affected by the change" (McLain, p.176), especially if it has not already done so.

> *No opinion surveys asking whether people favour year-round education should be made until after the people have had a chance to learn about the plan or plans proposed for the community.* (McLain, p.177, our italics)

Finally, with regard to the consultative process, McLain stresses the need for an open "flow of information" from the very outset of a project considering YRS. He emphasizes that understanding combats hostility and apathy while it creates supporters.

3.2. MORRIS A. SHEPARD AND KEITH BAKER: *YEAR ROUND SCHOOLS* (1977)

Shepard and Baker's fourth chapter presents guidelines about the kinds of issues which planners of YRS need to consider. These issues constitute some of the information still relevant, in the 1990's, to the consultative process regarding YRS.

A. Budgetary Issues

An analysis of projected budgets will be a major part of any feasibility study for YRS. Shepard and Baker discuss in some detail the following types of budgetary information necessary to discussions of YRS:

a) annual budgets per school
b) annual spending per pupil
c) one-time costs of starting up YRS
d) fixed spending (i.e., payments required whether or not students are actually in the building)
e) variable spending (i.e. teachers' salaries)

Shepard and Baker offer helpful suggestions for the comparison of YRS budgeting and traditional calendar budgeting so that a planning committee can see the picture more clearly. For instance, they demonstrate how apparent increases in some operating costs are considerably offset by actual savings in annual spending per pupil. The descriptions of cost controversies, along with pertinent arguments, also provide enlightenment for YRS discussions.

B. Educational Issues

A feasibility study of YRS must contain information about educational issues for consideration during the consultative process. Shepard and Baker offer useful perspectives on such issues as

a) curriculum revisions, especially towards increased individualization
b) learning loss and retention
c) evaluation of students' achievement
d) remediation
e) acceleration or "fast-tracking"
f) school entry and leaving
g) inter-school student transfer
h) continuation from elementary to secondary school

C. YRS and Parents, Teachers, Community

Although Shepard and Baker treat each of these three aspects separately, there are commonalities about which planners of YRS need information in order to facilitate decision-making. With regard to the change to YRS, the main features that parents, teachers and the community must come to terms are twofold:

a) adjusting habitual patterns of living and working within a YRS calendar
b) adapting to altered vacation periods

Shepard and Baker deal particularly with such community issues as part-time employment, apprenticeships, tourism, recreational organizations, juvenile crime and vandalism, migrant populations. YRS, suggest these writers, carries benefits for all of these aspects. But a planning committee needs information specific to their own community in the early stages of considering YRS.

3.3. ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS: *A PRIMER ON YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION* (1988)

In chapter 6 of their *Primer*, the Association of California School Administrators stresses the importance of defusing the highly vocal opposition to YRS by having administrators work with union personnel from the earliest stages of consultation. Teachers themselves are often resistant to YRS and they, too, must be involved in the plans and discussions. The Primer lists some of the information vital to give teachers in order to assure their understanding and support (*Primer*, p.48). For instance, will teachers have adequate planning days built into the year-round calendar?

In addition, all members of the community need to be helped to "think differently" (*Primer*, p.50) when YRS is being considered. Like McLain and Shepard and Baker, the Primer offers arguments useful to defuse outright rejection of YRS and integral to carefully orchestrated consultation. Specific measures are also offered for coping with the 30% of the school/community that speaks and acts against YRS in the face of the 40% neutral and 30% positive but passive voices.

Chapter 6, "Adjustments and Opposition", further outlines issues concerning curriculum, co-curricular programs, finances support personnel (i.e.: custodians, bus-drivers). It provides information and examples that a planning committee or feasibility study should address.

3.4. *ALBERTA EDUCATION* (1990 and 1991)

The draft of *Year-Round Education: How to Get Started and Communication Needs* from Alberta Education (March 6, 1990) almost constitutes a handbook of consultative processes important in implementing YRS. It stresses a pro-active approach and regular, open communication. Four phases are described, from *Beginning* the Process through *Educating* [Everyone] and *Decision Making* to *Implementation*. The first three phases are succinct summaries of steps in consultation about YRS.

Phase 1: Beginning the Process

(a) Before a board has made a commitment to YRS or selected potential school sites, the board appoints a district-level study committee to develop a 10-year facility plan (if one is not already in place).

(b) The study team consisting of representatives from all groups (especially parents) affected by YRS considers alternative YRS calendars and makes recommendations to the board.

(c) Teams report to the board after gathering information from a wide variety of sources, including (i) visitations to YRS schools (see p.76 of the A.C.S.A. *Primer* for a checklist on what to look for on such a visit); (ii) attendance at a National Association for Year Round Education conference.

Phase 2: Educational Phase

(a) A task force (8-10 people) brings teams together to present information to school district personnel, school staffs, parent groups, service groups and civic organizations, public meetings.

(b) Media coverage appears in school district publications, newspapers, schools, and on television and radio.

Phase 3: Decision Making

(a) Surveys are conducted of parents, teachers, other school staff, the community.
(b) The board holds public hearings.
(c) The board decides yes/no, which school(s) and which calendar.

What is particularly helpful about the draft of *Year-Round Education: How to Get Started and Communications Needs* is a series of diagrams and advice about that last aspect: communications. Not only does this document delineate the members of the community to consider during and after consultation, it also describes concerns of and dealings with those members; such as, parents, public services, police, community service clubs, P.T.A. councils, day-care agencies, youth service agencies, media. Internal Jurisdiction Communications and In-School Communications receive the same detailed categories and caveats.

From the same source - Craig Roxburgh, Director of Policy and Evaluation Branch of Alberta Education - comes *Year-Round Education: Some Questions and Answers* (revised May 6, 1991). The 24 questions and answers will help the planners of YRS in collecting information and in defusing that 30% of the school/community that is likely to voice antagonism. The document is a model for the types of questions and answers that one needs for a well coordinated consultation process.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 4

EXAMPLES OF ONTARIO SCHOOL BOARDS' INTEREST IN YRS

During the latter part of the 1980's and into the 90's, several school boards in Ontario actively investigated YRS as an alternative for alleviating space/accommodation problems and/or delivering educational programs. Although there are books written on the subject, these Boards did not follow any one path in their deliberations: each context was different.Such factors as perceived need, origins of interest (e.g., administration-driven, trustee-driven, school-driven), amount of resources committed, timing, and consultation process made each situation different. Before we get to a consideration of the consultation process in Durham, a brief summary is offered of the experience of four other Boards with YRS - York Region, Halton Public, Muskoka Public, and Peel.

4.1. YORK REGION

The Board established a "Year Round School" Committee in 1989 as an option in a range of strategies in response to rapid population growth in the region. This Committee received further impetus when a Sub-Committee on Accommodations of the special Committee on Growth recommended that the Board continue its investigations about school calendar. A broad-based Board Committee was struck which included three Trustees, four members of Senior Administration, five school-based administrators, and representatives from six employee groups. Students, parents and/or community members were not included. A number of issues - planning/finance, curriculum/organization, community/family relations, staff relations, student learning - were explored with information collected, reports written, and presentations made within the committee. The Chairperson of the Committee was also the principal designate of a new secondary school being built in Markham, one that would be considered as a likely candidate for a pilot on YRS.

During this period, several members of the Committee attended a Conference on Year Round Education sponsored by the Ontario Council for Leadership in Educational Administration (OCLEA) held at OISE at the beginning of 1991. Articles appearing in Toronto papers about year round schooling and the conference mentioned the ongoing activity within the York Region Board. What had been up till that point an in-house process of information gathering and consultation, publicly sanctioned through Board approval, became a cause célèbre - there was a fair amount of public reaction, particularly concerned about implementation without consultation. Administration reacted

swiftly by setting up meetings with leaders of home and school associations. The purpose of the meetings was to provide information about the ongoing process and assure everyone that no decisions had yet been taken. YRS became a political issue within the Board itself, especially with trustees who had been early supporters of the decision to investigate this potential strategy for relieving the effects of increased school populations. At about the same time as YRS became controversial within the Board, a group of parents from the York Region organized an Anti-Modified School year Coalition (AMSYC) whose purpose was to oppose any plans to alter the school calendar.

At the June 1991 meeting of the Board, the Modified School Year Committee recommended, and the Board passed, the authorization for public meetings to be held to both inform the public and receive community input on various aspects of modifying the school calendar, and that in January 1992 the Board consider the merits of implementing a modified school plan. The June meeting was heavily attended by members of the community and the media, with representation made by AMSYC against the plan for modifying the school calendar.

The plan developed by the MSY Committee involved fifteen public meetings to be held in different geographic areas of the Region. Part of the public discussion included the consideration of developing a pilot project in schools, possibly to include the new secondary school, Middlefield Collegiate, along with its two feeder schools. A group of classroom teachers and principals was recruited to facilitate the public meetings. The plan was to conduct the first half of the meeting for information purposes, followed by the use of small groups so that individuals could discuss issues in more depth. The first few meetings did not go according to plan, since several people in the audience became disruptive by opposing the strategy for breaking into small groups. In some cases, abuse was vocally directed at the facilitators, and the meetings became tense with few opportunities for the give and take of discussion.

This period of public consultation coincided with the campaign to elect a new School Board in November. YRS had become an important election issue with several incumbents and other candidates campaigning against the concept. There was little support for the concept from the local newspapers. After the first five public meetings and just a few weeks before the election, at the suggestion of Senior Administration, the Board met and unanimously voted to cease any further activity regarding the modified school calendar.

4.2. HALTON BOARD

The activity in this Board represents a very different approach from any of the others. A grass-roots movement by the principal and staff was initiated at General Brock Secondary School, a vocational school in Burlington. In April, 1990, a small group of Halton educators met at the school and agreed to request a feasibility study for looking at alternative ways of structuring the school calendar. This request for an 'in-house' study to the administration of the Board involved both the school and the Adult and Continuing Education Department of the Board. Many of the clientele served by the school have multiple handicaps and disabilities and have had difficulties in previous educational settings. A significant mission of the school is for entry into the world of work, and contacts with the community. Given the at-risk nature of some of the students and the emphasis on job skills, changes in the school calendar in the form of multiple school entry times and flexible course scheduling throughout the year was deemed desirable by the school staff. In September 1990, four staff committees were established and by April 1991 the reports of the committees resulted in an almost unanimous vote by staff to continue the feasibility study. Since that time, liaison with different constituent groups (Board, Administrators, Community) has been taking place, including contact with parents of all students enroled in the school. The results have been unanimous support from all involved constituents. A proposal for changes in the school year calendar is now being submitted to the Ministry of Education.

4.3. MUSKOKA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Set in the heart of Ontario resort country, this Board had been involved in discussions about YRS since 1989 when a principal and school trustee attended the National Association for Year Round Education Conference. Although most of the Board's schools were not in danger of being overpopulated, there was interest in investigating flexibility associated with modifying the school calendar for educational reasons and to accommodate life styles associated with a recreation industry in which many families work during the summer. In the spring of 1990, an ad hoc Committee of the Board was set up which included trustees, a superintendent, other staff, one parent, and a representative from the Recreation Department in Huntsville. In Fall 1991 (before the Trustee election) an interim report from this Committee pointed to the educational and operational viability of YRS for Muskoka, but that further study was needed. After the Trustee election, a new Committee was formed

which reported to the Planning and Development Committee of the Board. The final report from the Committee in Spring 1992 contained no major changes from the interim report, except that the need for any pilot project was predicated upon receiving funds from the Ministry of Education. Since no funds were available from that source, and the Board by this time was feeling the financial crunch shared by most school boards, the issue was shelved.

A few points should be made to provide some context for the Muskoka example. Unlike York or Durham, there are virtually no space problems in Muskoka schools; one school in Huntsville has several portables attached to it, but would not have numbers large enough to justify a multi-track option. Cost savings were never possible (partly because all students are bussed to school) and the major justification would have been for educational and life-style purposes. A pilot study might have been possible if decisions had been taken a few years earlier, but 1992 found the Board in dire financial straits. A second aspect of the Muskoka situation was the impetus given to these discussions by one principal who a was very active spokesperson for YRS throughout Canada. His advocacy was an important feature in keeping YRS as a prominent issue in Muskoka.

4.4. PEEL BOARD OF EDUCATION

This region contains the largest public school board in Canada, with growth coming from increased development in its Northern end and the large number of immigrants who embark in Canada at Mississauga's Pearson Airport. To consider issues concerning space, accommodation, increasing financial pressures, and improved educational programming, a special study team was established by the administration in Fall 1991 to determine the desirability and feasibility of YRS for Peel. The team of over twenty people was drawn from senior administration, research, assessment and planning personnel, and representatives of the various professional groups such as Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF), Peel Educators Association, and Canadian Union of Public Employees. As part of its mandate, this group reviewed the literature on YRS, met with Ministry officials, examined and monitored the proposals and activities in Durham, York and Halton, conducted a short survey of secondary school students, sought input from teacher federations and other unions, and conducted projection studies of several models for delivering YRS.

In the Fall of 1992, the group reported to the Board that YRS was not feasible for the Peel schools at this time. Among the reasons offered for this conclusion were:

- no substantial desire for YRS on the part of parents or students; and a recognition of political opposition to such change in other jurisdictions (York, Durham)

- no cost savings associated with YRS; any savings in capital construction would be more than offset by other capital costs (e.g., air conditioning) and operating expenses
- no clear-cut research results on the instructional benefits for students
- no intense interest shown on the part of the Ministry of Education to change grant regulations in support of YRS
- necessity for negotiating increased flexibility for staff assignments, even though little teacher opposition to YRS was anticipated
- additional funding for transitional costs pilot project would be difficult to find and support.

As a result of the study team report, no plans regarding YRS are forthcoming from the Peel administration.

While other school boards showed interest and engaged in consultative activities about YRS, the most extensive example of sustained involvement, and the development of an elaborate consultation process, can be found in the activities of the Durham Board of Education. The next chapter delineates the story of that Board's history with YRS.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS IN THE DURHAM BOARD OF EDUCATION

5.1. BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY

At the June 10, 1991, meeting of the Durham Board of Education (DBE), Trustee Bobbi Drew moved:

> That staff be directed to identify two Modified School Year Pilot Projects; and that staff initiate a process to implement both a Multi-Track and Single-Track Modified School Year Pilot Project; and that staff report to the Board not later than November 30, 1991 on the planned process for implementation of the Pilot Programs; and the position of the Modified School Year (MSY) Project Leader be continued, subject to annual review.

The motion was carried unanimously. This action by the Board was the culmination of almost three years of interest in the Modified School Year as an opportunity to explore alternative resolutions to some of the problems associated with present and projected growth in Durham's school population. As Walter Pitman has observed: "The topic of Year-Round Education is one that most trustees want to avoid like the proverbial plague" (Pitman, 1992, p.34). The Durham trustees, however, welcomed the topic and embarked on a voyage towards YRS.

The smoothness of Durham's launching of YRS consultation, appeared to short-lived. After the summer break, within a few months, the relatively tranquil, orderly process leading up to board approval had changed, perhaps largely because of timing. The process of choosing pilot schools and the procedures for community consultation occurred just at election-time for a new school board. During November 1991, the complexities of the election resulted in a politicized consultation process on YRS. A heightened political awareness of the process and of implications for individuals, schools, and communities seemed to move the proposal for YRS off-course and culminated in a Board decision which was captured in a headline from the Toronto Star, "All-Year School Calendar Rejected" (Toronto Star, May 14, 1992, SDI P.1).

5.2. THE RESEARCH PROCESS

What appears here in PART TWO of this report is my interpretation of the consultation process experienced in the Durham board over a four-year period. I chose a research strategy which allows the opportunity to penetrate and understand the multi-faceted nature of the consultation process. The case study approach enables the researcher to interpret the process as it is experienced by the variety of individuals involved in the YRS story. This approach uses a variety of techniques - talking with people through both formal interviews and informal discussions; watching the process by observing at meetings; and documentary analysis of the process through reading the many written materials.

The consultation process was extensive and complicated since it included a number of interest groups; such as, trustees, the public, the specific school communities, non-school sectors, (e.g., industry, daycare, and recreational organizations), diverse staff, senior administrators (including the Director and Superintendents, principals, teachers, secretaries, custodians) and other educational communities (Ministry of Education, other school jurisdictions). A variety of approaches for informing the various communities included press releases, letters and memoranda, radio and television appearances, videocassettes, workshops and numerous meetings. An example of the scope of the consultation process lies in the fact that sixty-six information meetings were held by the Project Leader, throughout the Durham board from January to December, 1991.

To tell the story of this complicated process means that some features will assume greater prominence than others. By necessity, this account is selective; for it is based on (1) my interpretive choices made from numerous documents (memos, minutes of meetings, newspaper accounts), (2) my observations at a few dozen of the numerous meetings held on MSY in Durham, and (3) my records of thirty-nine formal interviews and (4) my numerous informal conversations which I held with project personnel, present and past supervisory staff, members of the MSY Advisory Committee, principals, staff and parents of the five schools being considered as pilot projects, trustees, administrative staff, and community members.

The choice of whom to speak with rested on my shoulders. Many of my choices were based on a sampling procedure known as *snowballing*; that is, likely candidates for interviewing became apparent as the process moved along. Of course, the acceptance to be interviewed was voluntary (see Appendix A for a copy of the letter of permission used in the study). I am grateful for participants' willingness to share their experiences and opinions in the best interests of education in Durham region. Unfortunately, the horizons of my interpretations were limited by my being involved in only one of the four years of Durham's deliberations. I also recognize that I did play a small role in the deliberations;

thus, I am part of the story, whose fullness is difficult for me to know totally. My role as researcher of Durham's deliberations, however, has enabled me to reflect on my part in this story. The duality of my involvement will be included in the telling of this tale.

5.3. CALM WATERS - SMOOTH SAILING: THE VOYAGE TOWARDS YRS BEGINS

The Durham region is one of the fastest growing areas in Ontario. Situated east of Metro Toronto, Durham has shared in the population growth of the Greater Toronto Area because of increases in immigration quotas, the "baby boom echo", and the increased cost of living in Metropolitan Toronto. As of January, 1992 the Durham Board of Education (DBE) operated 88 elementary and 18 secondary schools and had 492 portables on site as well as 16 locations for special needs students. The system accommodated approximately 56,000 students and used 441 vehicles to transport 16,354, (DBE, Budget 92, B-2). With continued growth, the upcoming introduction of Junior Kindergarten, and decreased levels of funding from the Ministry of Education for capital construction costs, the Durham board faces problems of space, accommodation, and overall financial pressures.

Within this context, I return the reader to 1988. At that time, a well-respected veteran trustee, Ruth Lafarga, former chair of the Board became interested in YRS when one of her constituents, a mother, sent her an article on the topic. She subsequently attended a workshop held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in June 1988 on the structure of the school day and school year. She brought her interest to the Program Committee of the Durham board as an innovation that had potential for resolving problems with space and accommodation in the region's schools. In the fall of 1988, the Program Committee agreed that the Superintendent of Curriculum, Bruce Walker, should designate a staff person to study and report on the topic by spring 1989. Walker, through his curriculum consultant network, looked for a staff member who was doing graduate studies and who would help gather material on YRS. In December 1988, Monica Krawetz, Academic Resource Teacher at Roland Michener School, was enlisted to compile information and report by spring 1989. As part of this task, she attended the annual conference of the National Association for Year-Round Education, and began developing a network of educators interested in and/or involved with YRS, and completed "Year Round Education: A Discussion Paper" (1989).

The first extended attempt at consultation was the development of a Steering Committee to review the Krawetz document. The need for such consultation was very much a feature of the information gathered on YRS, and Walker understood that the contemplation of such a major departure from the traditional school calendar needed a broad base of informed opinion and support. The original Modified School Year Steering Committee was composed of individuals representing groups within the

Durham board: Trustees (2); Superintendent of Schools (1); Elementary Principals Association (1); Secondary Principals Association (1); Durham Elementary Teachers Association (1); Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (1); Plant Department (1); Clerical Staff (1); Canadian Union of Public Employees. Bruce Walker chaired the Steering Committee. In May 1989, the Committee discussed the Report, as did Administrative Council (Director and other Senior Administrators) and the Program and Curriculum Committee of the Board.

The Report was favourably received and in June 1989, the Program and Curriculum Committee of the Board recommended that more study be given to the planning and implementation of YRS in those settings in the United States which had implemented changes to the school calendar. Clearly, the intention behind the committee's recommendation was to investigate issues, strategies, problems and possibilities associated with concrete calendar change and to anticipate particular approaches which would be useful in Durham. The second report and a set of recommendations from Bruce Walker and his committee were presented to the November 1990 Program Committee. The report suggested that:

"An alternate school year program for the DBE would need to address several key factors:

- the development of an action plan before attempting significant change,
- the communication with and the involvement of community groups, parents, teachers, administrators and board personnel,
- the completion of a cost analysis projection for possible pilot schools" (Walker, 1990, p.3)

An elaboration of the communication process pointed out that diverse groups both within and outside DBE had to be involved in the planning stages since, "their understanding and ultimate acceptance of the alternate school year program is vital to its success" (Walker, 1990, P.4). Those included were to be administrators, teachers and other employees as well as parents, students, community agency directors and community leaders.

The report also stated that once pilot schools were identified, the entire school community had to be involved in various ways in order to implement successfully a changed school calendar. Additionally, the report stated that the Business Office of DBE be involved in cost analysis projections. The Appendix to Walker's Report included a tentative action plan which laid out a timetable for activities leading to a start-up date of summer 1992 for a pilot school with a modified calendar. The Appendix to his report also contained a list of questions which needed to be examined in considering an alternate school year program. The Report concluded with recommendations: (1) to develop and

report to the Board by June 1, 1991 on a cost analysis projection for possible pilot schools; (2) to hire a fulltime project leader from January 1, 1991 for 6 months subject to extension; (3) immediately to plan and implement training sessions for all staff in order to provide information for them and receive input from them. The Board approved these measures and Monica Krawetz was formally seconded to be Project Leader as of January 1991. As matters turned out, she performed that role for a period of eighteen months, through June 1992. Both the cost analysis projections and the program of information and awareness sessions were initiated. Although there were other projects worthy of support which did not receive comparable resources, the allocation of funds for YRS was one clear indication of sustained interest.

After the Board's approval of these recommendations, the Steering Committee engaged in a brainstorming session on developing a communications plan and on suggesting possible groups which needed information about YRS in Durham. At this time, discussions began about the possible criteria that would be used for choosing pilot schools, if and when the Board reached that stage. Among the criteria discussed were: (1) new schools to be built, (2) socio-economic make-up of community, (3) interest of school and community, (4) family of schools with availability of alternate choices, (5) absence of large-scale bussing, (6) academic achievement enhancement, (7) accommodation difficulties, (8) consideration of elementary and secondary schools. Jack Upton, Manager of Property, Planning and Transportation, and a member of the Steering Committee, were asked to have the Planning Staff develop, by the December meeting of the Committee, a set of criteria. These two were also asked to apply the criteria to Durham schools in order to create a list from which schools suitable for YRS might be chosen.

5.4. PHASE ONE OF SELECTING SCHOOLS SUITABLE FOR YRS

At the December 1990 meeting of the Steering Committee, the list of criteria was presented along with the names of ten schools chosen from the twenty-one in the Durham system which met the criteria. The revised criteria included: (1) new schools under construction; (2) schools with a large walking population; (3) schools with high indigenous populations; (4) schools with portables on site; (5) school size; (6) schools with few special needs pupils; (7) urban and rural community (i.e., schools with both populations); (8) enrollment as a percent of Ministry of Education rated capacity; (9) boundary expansion capability (i.e., ability to take pupils from adjacent schools with portables). The list was somewhat different from the earlier suggestions of the Steering Committee in that the planning staff concentrated more on physical properties and in some cases, political realities (e.g., urban/rural), than on educational and social issues.

The Steering Committee was concerned that a list of ten schools might not be large enough. The Committee requested that the full list of twenty-one be available. They were also concerned about publicizing the identity of any school even remotely being considered for inclusion and requested that a revised list mask school identities. This problem of premature identification continually plagued the process of consultation. Once the process was sufficiently developed to consider potential schools (well before the Board formally voted to locate pilot schools), rumours of possible candidate schools for YRS circulated around the system. This rumour-mill became so counterproductive that in June 1991 Walker circulated a memorandum to superintendents, education officers, principals, managers, supervisors and consultants in which he stated: "Despite our efforts to keep our staff, parents and ratepayers informed with accurate information, rumours and misinformation continue to surface about the how, where, and when of the two pilot projects" (Walker, June 25, 1991).

Also in November 1990, Pauline Laing, the Director of Education, and Ian Brown, then Chairperson of the DBE, wrote to the Minister of Education, Marion Boyd, to inform her of the recommendations passed by the Board, to inquire further about the approval process for modifying the school year and to request incentive funds for carrying out a pilot project. Ms. Boyd stated that Regulation 822 (which governs school year and holidays) could accommodate modifications to the school calendar and that changes would be handled through the usual channels. The Minister emphasized that any such changes required an elaborate consultation and acceptance process within the community and needed to "...include meetings with and reaction from all appropriate constituent groups such as students, parents, teaching and support staff, neighbouring boards, community agencies and the local business community" (Boyd, 1990. p.1) Her letter also laid out the terms for a pilot project including "...the model which would outline the purpose, education plan, implementation process, expected benefits, adverse consequences, and evaluation plan and any other details which would assist the decision-making process" (Boyd, p.2). Additionally, she announced that no incentive funds were available but that ministry personnel would be available for assistance in rewriting a pilot project. Through the Central Ontario Regional Office, a forum for interested School Boards was initiated and continues to this day.

As part of the mandate from the Ministry of Education that the consultation process should include feedback from those being consulted, information about interest in YRS was collected during the small and large group meetings, and on-site visitations were conducted by the Project Leader. Returned surveys indicated the 36% were positive, 36% were undecided, and 28% were negative about the idea of YRS (Walker, *Modified School Year Report*, June 3, 1991, p.9). Additionally, survey responses raised questions of how the implementation of YRS could accommodate such conveniences as air conditioning during summer. The survey responses also voiced concerns about the impact of YRS

on family life style and raised questions about equivocal evidence of educational advantages of YRS, especially regarding better retention of learning. Such concerns permeated the remainder of the consultation process.

During the winter/spring of 1991/1992, a costing analysis was conducted through the office of the Business Superintendent, Brian Cain. The possible costs for two potential schools were projected (see Appendix B). The analysis predicted immediate, additional costs which were associated with implementing a modified school year program, i.e., additional administrative, secretarial and custodial services, utilities, maintenance, air conditioning. These costs, however, could potentially be offset through reductions resulting from implementing multi-track options, and through avoidance of new classroom construction while resolving overcrowding. According to Walker: "In a growing school board, capital savings can outweigh the increase in operating costs" (Walker, June 3, 1991, p.11).

Everything appeared to be set: a Project Leader was on board, a full-blown consultation process had been developed and a projected cost analysis was available. All of these activities combined to bring the ship of the consultation process into a safe berth at the June 1991 meeting of the Board which unanimously approved the resolutions to initiate pilot projects for YRS.

What was not clear in June 1991 was how very different would be the second half of the voyage: the implementation process. What weighed down the entire process was the long summer holiday; what lay unseen over the horizon was impending political heavy weather.

The only activity around YRS over the summer of 1991 was a continuation of efforts to obtain funding to conduct research on the Durham project. During the spring, I had called an informal meeting of parties from several Ontario boards, including Durham, interested in YRS, and the intention was to prepare a proposal and seek funding for a multi-year study of the development, implementation and evaluation of YRS. Only Durham was in a position to consider such research involvement; thus, a proposal was drafted and conveyed to the Ministry of Education. The summer was spent in seeking the resources to begin the study. That procedure turned out to be more complicated than originally anticipated, because the Ministry expressed a greater interest in studying the consultation process than in funding research on the implementation and evaluation of YRS. The research was put on hold until funds became available in February 1992.

From January to June, the Project Leader in Durham held information sessions at over fifty school advisory committee meetings. These committees consisted of numerous staff and employee groups which included secondary principal and vice-principal associations, elementary teachers associations, OSSTF, other educational groups, and staffs of six elementary schools (2 of which, Highbush and Athabasca, were later to be included as part of the five schools in Phase 2 which were being considered as pilots), and several community groups, including Durham Region YMCA and Oshawa Leisure Council. For the most part, school groups volunteered to join such sessions. But, controlling attendance at such meetings is difficult. For example, although a meeting may be called by the Elementary Principals Association, full attendance is not necessarily guaranteed by principals of schools which would be appropriate for YRS. On the one hand, reaching interested parties is easy and they bring curiosity and motivation. On the other hand, reaching skeptical or negative parties who choose not to participate in information sessions is difficult. Keeping the door open for their further participation is also challenging.

5.5. CHOPPY WATERS: UNCERTAIN NAVIGATION

The new school year started out uneventfully for YRS when, at its first meeting on September 11, 1991, the Steering Committee reviewed the criteria for YRS school selection which had been developed by the planning committee in January 1991. By September, the original list of nine schools had been expanded to include schools where proposals for capital funding had been rejected by the Ministry of Education, and where indication of support for becoming part of the proposed pilot project had been expressed by school staff and community. (This last criterion is important for any successful proposed change.) As the story unfolds, we will see that this criterion was a mixed blessing in the DBE process. School interest became the dominant criterion, dominating other equally worthy criteria, generated by Property, Planning and Transportation. At the suggestion of Trustee Ruth Lafarga, the list of potential schools was sent for approval to the Property and Transportation Committee Board and was approved unanimously. The Steering committee also reaffirmed the importance of the consultation process through the development of a protocol for soliciting schools about staff and parent interest in becoming part of the pilot.

At both the September and October meetings of the Steering Committee, work was done on drafts of a suggested format for staff and parental involvement in identifying pilot schools and on a suggested timeline for the process leading up to the opening of a single track pilot school in summer 1992 (see Appendix C).

But as the trustee election in November approached, the projected time line for implementation of YRS looked increasingly over-optimistic. Several events helped to create an impasse. First, a number of trustees had decided to retire from the Board, including Ruth Lafarga (who had been the original impetus behind the YRS project) and Ian Brown (the Chairperson of the Board). Several candidates running in the city of Oshawa publicly voiced their opposition to YRS in Durham. Their subsequent election changed the composition of the Board to include several trustees who eventually broke the unanimity previously achieved on all issues of the project.

A second event which helped to politicize Durham's consultation process was the very public discussion about YRS in the adjacent York Region Board of Education (YRBE). As indicated in Chapter Four in June 1991, the YRBE had voted to hold public meetings on the advisability and feasibility of implementing YRS in a new secondary school and its two feeder schools in the Markham region. The issue became hotly contested during York's election campaign because of the opposition of a well organized group of incumbents and other candidates running under "The Reform Network". The political opposition was so intense that at the public consultation meetings, staff had difficulty controlling proceedings. Finally, at the Oct. 28, 1991 Board meeting, the trustees voted to suspend further consultation and pursuit of proposed pilot projects for YRS.

This heightened political atmosphere in Durham Region resulted in some trustees and members of senior administration delaying the process of selection of schools to pilot YRS. Some board members foresaw an unfairness to the incumbent candidates campaigning in the wake of schools having been chosen prior to the election. Consequently, the Steering Committee became uncertain about the status of the project.

Nonetheless, during this time, activities and some decisions were occurring in spite of the uncertainty caused by the political influences. Proceeding with discussion, the Steering Committee indicated that a single track would be the wisest way to initiate YRS in a chosen school. Even if a school fit the criteria for a multi-track calendar, the first year should develop experience designing a single-track system. Compared with a multi-track system, this limited implementation would likely be much less disruptive to the regional schools and communities. The limited focus would more easily demonstrate educational advantages. A second decision made was to concentrate initially on elementary schools. There was a concern that the secondary schools in Durham did not have sufficient number of students to warrant a multi-track calendar. The concern was whether there would be enough resources to provide the necessary programs for each track.

5.6. TRANSITIONAL PHASE OF SELECTING SCHOOLS SUITABLE FOR YRS

The Planning Department had developed a list of twenty-one elementary schools which met the ten criteria based on physical and geographic features. In order to make use of the eleventh criterion - community interest - superintendent Walker contacted all Area Superintendents and requested that they inquire of principals if there was any interest on the part of staff and/or community of the school to be included as part of the consultation process on YRS. An additional fifteen schools were named by the Superintendents as a result of their inquiries. The list of candidate schools became 36. In November, an inservice session was held for the administrative teams, Superintendents of Education and liaison trustees for thirty-three of the thirty-six identified schools. (Three schools never responded to the invitation.) The session had two purposes: (1) to further introduce the concept of YRS to the group and (2) to provide the groups with a procedure for determining the level of support by staff and parents for continuing in the consultation process.

Support within a school was ascertained initially by having the principal determine whether both the liaison trustee and superintendent of education supported a continuation of the process. If that support was available, then the principal was to survey both the school staff and a representative group of the parent community to determine if at least 2/3 of each group supported continuation of the consultation process. If all these criteria were met, then the name of the school would become part of a list to be presented to the Steering Committee and then to the Board. At that time, there was no way of knowing how many schools would be nominated using this process.

This transitional process was used to cross from PHASE ONE, the development of a large list of potential school sites, to PHASE TWO, a short list of schools which would have intensive consultation sessions culminating in a referendum in each school as to whether it wished to participate in modifying the school calendar. PHASE THREE would take place if one, but not more than two schools voted to modify their calendar.

There were two concerns about the transitional procedure which was used to move from PHASE ONE to PHASE TWO. These concerns may have helped to make the voyage towards YRS a little more rocky. First, there appeared to be some uncertainty about how to survey the parent community. Some principals spoke with a few parents, others consulted the executive of the School Advisory Committee (SAC), and still another surveyed the audience at a regularly scheduled SAC meeting. There was some concern expressed at the Steering Committee meeting in December about the results ascertained in some schools. Walker was asked to follow-up with several schools to clarify the results.

A second aspect of the transitional process which may have influenced future aspects of the consultation process was the "message" which was received by school communities about what participation in PHASE TWO meant for a school. There were some members of the school communities listed in some PHASE TWO schools who did not understand that they were voting on a process which would lead to a decision about actually modifying the calendar. Rather, they felt that they were voting simply to gain even more information about YRS.

This confusion became evident during the public meetings held in PHASE TWO schools. Whether this confusion was a natural consequence of the difficulties in being able to control the "message" received during the process of public communication, or whether some opponents of the idea were using this confusion as justification for mistrusting the Board's intentions, the consultation process was being undermined in the PHASE TWO schools.

In November, the trustee election resulted in some major changes to the composition of the Board. Nine new members were elected, several of whom had expressed opposition to YRS during the campaign. This opposition was to have strongest impact on the schools in Oshawa, where eventually two schools were scheduled to be included in PHASE TWO. The Board membership also changed in other ways: it lost a number of experienced trustees who had had a good working relationship among themselves and with the schools administration. A changeover in a Board's composition usually contains an element of uncertainty. At least with regard to YRS, this uncertainty was translated into a different degree of support and involvement in the YRS process.

At about the same time, in the fall of 1991, the Program Committee of the Board set in motion a proposal to restructure the Steering Committee and create an Advisory Committee. The intention behind the proposal appears to have been twofold: first, that with the identification of schools for PHASE TWO, the process would shift from mainly staff development responsibility for studying and proposing options, to one of political accountability; and second, that this shift warranted a broadening of the Committee to include parents and members of the community-at-large. The specific changes were (1) the Advisory Committee reported through the Program Committee to the Board, (2) a trustee was named as Chair, appointed by the Board, (3) a superintendent was named as Vice-Chair, designated by the Director, (4) the original composition of the Steering Committee was augmented by adding a third trustee, three parent representatives, and three community members-at-large. Although

the Advisory Committee had its first meeting in January 1992, several months elapsed before the parent and community representatives began to participate. There was much discussion about the process of choosing individuals from the community who would be appropriate, such as representatives from the business community, Chamber of Commerce, and other influential people in the community. Notices were placed in several outlets in order to attract volunteers.

Of the original thirty-six schools identified as possible sites, thirty-one returned survey data on staff and parents. In early 1992, a list of six schools meeting the required level of support was presented through the Advisory Committee to the Program Committee and on February 10, 1992 to the Board for approval.

The list contained two schools from Whitby (West Lynde P.S. and Hutchison P.S.), two from Oshawa (Coronation P.S. and Athobasca P.S.), and one from Pickering (Highbush P.S.) as well as the Grove School, a school at multiple locations which serves special-needs students, such as those in hospital and correctional facilities.

Because of the very different nature of Grove School in which students have no choice about when they attend school and because it operates on a full calendar year, the principal was interested in modifying the calendar according to staff interests. The consultation process in the Grove School was very different from the other five, so that for purposes of the Report, it will be assumed that only five schools were involved in the public consultation process, in preparation for PHASE THREE, implementation of YRS.

Highbush P.S. was the only school with a large enough school population to be considered for a multi-track calendar. The other four schools could contemplate only a single-track option. West Lynde P.S., the only one of the five which had appeared on the original list of twenty-one schools, briefly considered the possibility of multi-track but decided that at a little over 500 students, it would require too many split-grades to make YRS work.

When the list of five schools to be included in PHASE TWO was made public, there was a variety of reactions from individuals. The most consistent reaction was surprised at the fact that only one of the schools had multi-track potential. For this report, in interview after interview, - from administration staff, trustees, principals, teachers, to parents alike - a large number expressed surprise that more schools didn't fit the criteria based on space/accommodation considerations and potential cost-savings. But at the time that the process for choosing schools was taking place, the real criteria for selection had shifted to concerns with community acceptance and the educational advantages held for YRS.

As the consultation process unfolded in PHASE TWO, it became clear that for most of the schools (with the possible exception of Hutchison P.S.), there was less community support than had been anticipated and that there would be public scepticism about the educational benefits attributed to YRS.

There were several ways in which this backlash about the educational claims developed. When the names of the PHASE TWO schools were made public, the president of the SAC in each of the schools received an extensive packet of materials from a Mrs. A., a parent from one of the Durham Schools not chosen for Phase Two. This person had earlier attended an information session given by the YRS Project Leader at her children's school. Coincidentally, at the time a friend was visiting from Orlando, Florida, who expressed reservations to Mrs. A. about modifying the school calendar. In Florida, several years before Mrs. A.'s attendance at the Durham meeting, a few parents had brought a court case against the Orange County School Board to stop the implementation of YRS. (The suit was not successful, even on appeal to the Florida Court of Appeals). Mrs. A. started collecting material on YRS from all over the United States and concluded that the Durham Board should not participate in this innovation. She mailed materials to the schools and wrote letters to local newspapers expressing opposition to the idea. Parents in several of the schools (notably Coronation, Athabasca and Highbush) received the materials, adding them to their own investigations, and compiled material that they considered to be both research evidence and descriptions of schools where YRS was begun but ended after a period of time.

For the PHASE TWO schools there were, however, a number of activities and decisions surrounding the consultation process and the procedures associated with the referendum which this report has not yet addressed. The falling barometer of support for both consultation and the referendum indicated that choppy waters were being encountered. Navigation towards YRS turned from relative stability to uncertainty. The consultation process engaged in by the earlier Steering Committee and the newly created Advisory Committee was about to be seriously undermined by the political process.

During the fall 1991, the Steering Committee started considering the procedures to be used during PHASE TWO of the consultation about YRS. At the October 1991 meeting of the Steering Committee, discussion began on a suggested format for staff and community involvement for PHASE TWO schools. The format was to include procedures for (1) developing a representative committee from the school community, (2) designing ways to distribute information to the community, (3) planning the dates and format of the community information meetings, (4) running the meetings, (5) developing a voting list, and (6) coping with other features associated with conducting a referendum.

The intent was very clear: the Steering Committee wished to have each school community take responsibility for planning and implementing their own process of consultation. There was also a strong belief within the Committee, based on some of the literature on the consultation process with YRS, and based also on the experiences with the large group meetings conducted by the York Region Board of Education, that groups of no more than 25-30 people would be optimal for providing and sharing information. This limitation on numbers proved to be an irritant for two of the schools, in which some parents insisted on large-group information sessions. Accommodating large numbers of parents was difficult at the Highbush P.S.; yet several of their meetings involved large audiences (over a hundred people).

Other features of the consultation process that the Steering Committee addressed were the need to obtain support for air-conditioning the pilot schools, the eligibility of voters and the degree of community support expressed in the referendum vote that would be considered acceptable for continuing into PHASE THREE. From the beginning it was clear to the key players on the Steering Committee that a significant piece of information necessary for the consultation process was that pilot schools would be air conditioned. A reading of the literature and discussions with personnel in YRS jurisdictions, suggested that parents and staff would resist using the school during all or part of the summer without accommodating the heat factor; something which might influence the vote. When the schools were selected for Phase Two, the Board sought and received estimates for air-conditioning each of the facilities. The estimates varied because of the fact that several schools were older and had not been built to readily accommodate changing the duct system. A problem arose for some individuals because the contractor not only gave estimates for each school but summed them as if all five buildings were to be changed - never part of the Board's plan. The support for agreement on air-conditioning was subject to turbulent political waters. At the March 24, 1992 meeting of the Property/Planning and Transportation Committee, a motion to approve installation of air-conditioning in two pilot schools was defeated by a 4-3 vote. A tenuous motion calling for the Board to agree to consider the installation in pilot school(s) only after pilot calendars were established was passed by the same margin. The issue of eligibility of voters was a concern since parents whose children would be in the school for the calendar change would be the ones involved in the decision-making process. This included parents of children who were to be enroled in kindergarten of the year that PHASE THREE would begin, but excluded parents of current highest grades who would no longer have children in the school. In individual cases, where parents of those children who would be attending kindergarten a year later would be allowed to participate in the vote.

The discussions and decision-making about the accepted degree of community approval became the bell-weather indicator of the political fortunes of the YRS project. The Steering Committee originally recommended that a minimum of 3/4 of the community had to vote, and of those voters, 2/3 of the non-spoiled ballots had to be positive in order to consider that the community had said "yes" to YRS. The idea underlying this preparation was that a minimum of fifty percent of the community would thus be supportive. When this recommendation was discussed by the principals of the PHASE TWO schools, they recommended that the degree of community acceptance should be simply the number of votes signifying a positive response. When the Advisory Committee discussed this proposal, they decided that a simple majority should be the criterion of acceptance and conveyed that as a recommendation to the Program Committee. On March 2, Trustee McIlveen moved

> That in the Referendum Procedure to Identify Pilot Schools for the Modified School year Projects, a 66% majority of non-spoiled ballots cast supporting the development of a modified school year calendar be considered a positive vote.

The discussion at the Program Committee meeting was grounded in a concern that a significant number of the community should be supporting such a radical change. Also, one trustee remarked that 66% was the figure that he had conveyed to others in the board and community and that he wanted some consistency. The motion was passed overwhelmingly, with eight in favour and only one opposed.

When this recommendation went to the Durham Board on March 9, it ran into trouble from two groups of trustees: those favouring a simple majority and those wanting at least 75%. The motion lost 11-9, and the next motion, for simple majority, lost on a 10-10 tie vote. Finally, after heated debate on the first two motions, the Board voted 12-8 for 75% as an acceptable indication of community support for YRS. This action effectively made public what many staff, and particularly members of the Advisory Committee had felt, that the Board had changed its support for YRS. To all familiar with the project, it was clear that the referendum would be anti-climatic, YRS was effectively dead at this time. But the Board was committed to the process of consultation. Perhaps for some it was a Pyrrhic Victory, but for others the involvement of so many different groups in decision-making was seen as a first for the DBE and was equally as important as the outcome of the process. What follows is the part of the story that occurred after the schools were identified in February 1992.

5.7. PHASE TWO SCHOOLS CONSULTATION PROCESS

Just prior to the Board meeting of February 10, 1992 where the unanimous vote was taken on approving the schools for PHASE TWO, the principals of the schools were called to a meeting by Bruce Walker in order to work out the procedures for communicating with their communities and for handling the publicity that might be generated as a result of the public announcement. A letter was sent from the Director to the parents in each school, as well as additional information on YRS. There was little public reaction at first; few inquiries were made to principals or Superintendents. Was this a lull before the storm in several of the communities?

A two day in-service program on the consultation was provided in February for principals, vice-principals, SAC presidents and/or other parents, superintendents, and trustees of the Phase Two schools. The workshop included another orientation to YRS, information about the consultation process, issues surrounding conflict resolution and communication with parents, as well as material on cost analysis data and alternative arrangements that would be available for parents not wishing to keep their children in a modified calendar school. For each school, a figure of ten percent was arbitrarily chosen as the maximum number of families leaving a school where it would be financially possible for the Board to underwrite (keeping within the policy of bussing in situations where children are at least 1.6 kilometres from the school). Information was presented on the adjacent schools which would accommodate these children.

Following this session, schools established their school planning team, procedures and timetables for carrying out the consultation process. Principals met together several times and with the Project Leader and administrative head of the project. In particular, principals worked out procedures for dates and numbers of meetings to be held. Originally, the referendum was to be held at the end of May, with the expectation that the Board would consider the results at its June meeting. Concerned with too much time elapsing between the consultation meetings to be held in April and an end of May vote, the principals decided to move up the date of the referendum to May 7. As part of the deliberations conducted by the Advisory Board and passed by the Program Committee and the full Board, voting was to take place over a four-day period, with Monday and Tuesday, May 4 and 5 for voting, May 6 as an open date for contacting those who had not yet voted, and May 7 reserved as the last day for voting. Additionally, schools provided a variety of hours, including evenings, for voting. These procedures were developed in the spirit of trying to extend the franchise to as many as possible in the community. The decision to move up the referendum period turned out to be a mixed blessing, since some school community members subsequently felt that there wasn't enough time devoted to the

consultation process for the community, given the long period of gestation of the project within the Board. However, by the time the principals changed the dates, the events had proceeded to the point where it was doubtful that anything would have made a difference to the final outcome.

5.8. REACTIONS IN PHASE TWO SCHOOLS

There were quite diverse ways in which school communities reacted to participation in PHASE TWO. For two of the schools, West Lynde P.S. and Hutchison P.S., the consultation process was relatively uneventful. They followed the procedures set out through the Advisory Committee by keeping the format of small-group meetings. The principal of West Lynde had valuable experience as principal of a year round school at the Canadian Forces Base in Laars, Germany, and was comfortable with presenting the concept to the community. The school planning committee had put in place a well-organized procedure for calling parents and placing them into one of the information meetings. The principal started the process by holding an orientation session for the phone canvassers. There was also strong interest exhibited by one of the local trustees whose children attended the school. This interest was translated into attendance at almost every meeting held at the school. It is important to recognize that the process worked smoothly and there was strong vocal opposition within the community.

At Hutchison P.S. the process was equally as smooth but without the vocal opposition encountered at West Lynde. This school community is relatively self-contained with a small school population of 182 students from 140 families. There is a large number of special needs students within the school and there is strong rapport of the parents with both the principal and staff. The parents received information about YRS on a frequent basis (every two weeks) and they didn't appear to be influenced by newspaper accounts expressing opposition to the project.

Highbush P.S. presented quite a contrasting picture with the schools from Whitby. As the only school in PHASE TWO being considered for the multi-track option, there was a lot of pressure felt within the community because of the wishes of the Board to have at least one multi-track school. The process started out in a promising fashion during Phase One when the principal took advantage of an orientation session by Monica Krawetz and surveyed eighty members of the audience to ascertain 68% support. Afterwards, there was a number in the community who felt that the procedure was not representative of the community (even though the turnout was for a session on YRS and should have drawn the interest of those potentially opposed to the idea).

Highbush P.S. was opened three years ago by the present principal who hand-picked his staff which enjoys strong support from the community. Located in a relatively affluent area of Pickering, the school has been troubled by the population increase leading to a large number of portables on site, and some transfers from an overcrowded separate school. There was some difficulty in establishing the procedures for community participation because of the size of the parent population. Several of the meetings became large group sessions. Additionally, there was some confusion about who should chair the sessions. Early in the planning process when it was suggested that the Area Superintendent might assume that role, I intervened directly suggesting that the principal would be the more appropriate choice because it would establish local ownership rather than suggest a central-office directive.

For the most part, a great deal of animosity was displayed by a number of parents in the audience. This opposition was especially pronounced at the large group meetings which lived up to their reputation of providing the opportunity for strongly-held views to dominate and even silence the proceedings. The meetings appeared to act as a lightning rod for grievances against levels of taxation, the garbage disposal system in Pickering, bureaucrats, and teachers as well as YRS. There appeared to be three major issues that focused the opposition at Highbush. First, several people were concerned with making changes to a school that they believed, worked. They were not convinced that the educational arguments advanced in favour of YRS were really valid. Certainly, they felt that the educational arguments put forward by the Board amounted to "fixing something that wasn't broken". Second, some felt that they should not be the only group having to consider a multi-track calendar, and couldn't understand why the other four schools were not also chosen on space and accommodation criteria. Also, they didn't perceive that they had the option of considering an initial change to a single-track calendar as a way of moving to a smoother initiation into change. Third, for some, there was a general mistrust in the Board generally and the consultation process for YRS specifically. The role assigned to the school community as a significant decision-maker in the process was treated by some with scepticism; e.g., "Do you think the Board would spend so much time and resources and take no for an answer?" The surprise for them was the consistency with which the Board practised what it preached. Although, there is some concern that the consultation process might have put some strain on school-community relations, it seems as if the strong ties between the two can be refurbished. Those associated with the school were surprised by this response at a school which had a history of exemplary community relations. To their credit, a number of parents who had attended some of the meetings (and some who left early in disgust at the proceedings) made it a point to contact the principal to reassure him that the meetings did not represent the views (and behaviour) of many in the community. A planned protest march at a neighbouring church drew only minimal turnout.

The reactions and activities at the two Oshawa schools provided a real threat not only to their participation in PHASE TWO, but to the viability of continuing the project at all. A letter campaign by some parents at Coronation P.S. was the first public sign that the YRS project was starting to hit choppy waters. Letters sent to newspapers and to school officials by a group of "Concerned Parents" raised questions about the format of the information sessions to be held at the school. Their concern was that the small meetings being formed were an attempt to control when people could attend and what they would hear. Instead, they wanted only large meetings where people ask their own questions and that those who have first-hand knowledge should be available for the group's concerns about the concept, and about processes involved in voting (Letters, Oshawa Times, April 2, 1992, p.10). Other letters questioned the whole premise of YRS and represented its operation in the U.S. as a colossal failure. The battle was joined through the media as other letters were published from members of Coronation SAC and other community members who responded to the challenges of the 'concerned parents', and both the concept and process of consultation were engaged in battle in articles and editorials.

For some parents, YRS threatened their life-styles. One family from Coronation School actively opposed to the concept was concerned with the impact of YRS on their ability to use their cottage during the only vacation time available for the father. Opponents also believed that YRS didn't make sense because they were convinced that the educational and financial benefits were nonexistent. Opposition was not always well coordinated. In fact there were three different groups of parents who were opposed to YRS at Coronation, one group was more active than the others. In the main group, a few parents met and developed a network of opposition, which was facilitated by at least one trustee and the materials sent to them by Mrs. A. This group put out their own newsletter and went door-to-door soliciting support for their views. They were concerned that the Board was presenting a partial view of YRS and that their goal was to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the idea, so that the vote would be negative. As a result of some of the media attention for this group, several parents from Athabasca P.S. contacted them and this led to an exchange of materials and strategies.

They contacted the trustees in Oshawa and put pressure on them (i.e., the threat of one hundred picket marching outside of the school each meeting) to get the procedures for the public information sessions changed to accommodate their desire to have large open group meetings. A number of the Oshawa trustees agreed to their request and a meeting was arranged with members of Senior Administration and the Administrative Head of YRS, followed by an emergency meeting of the Advisory Committee. The trustees from Oshawa suggested a change to the consultation procedures for the two Oshawa schools to one large orientation meeting at the beginning and a final large one to summarize the issues that came up during the previous meetings. At the emergency Advisory

Committee meeting, the floor belonged to the Oshawa trustees (most of whom were not on the Committee), and many a word was heard from the non-trustee Advisory committee members. It was clear that the political process was in full force: at the time one staff member on the Advisory Committee made the comment to me that it would have been foolish for staff to oppose the trustees. An additional change to the consultation process was made by removing the principals of the two Oshawa schools from the responsibility of chairing the information meetings. Plans were made to have trustees and former trustees chair those sessions. These changes added to the frustration of some members of the Advisory Committee who saw some of their key recommendations on the criterion for referendum vote and the consultation procedures being overturned by Trustees who were not a party to the earlier decisions, and even worse, not supported by Trustee members of the Committee.

Although this trustee intervention had the effect of making the YRS ship list to the side, it had little impact on the procedures already in place at the other schools. In fact, the sessions at the other schools were in process, and in two cases, almost complete. The meetings held at both Oshawa schools brought out parents with strong negative views. The large meetings had a similar level of opposition and almost as much ill-will generated as was present at Highbush P.S.. The difference between the Oshawa schools and Highbush seemed to be evident at those meetings chaired by non-Oshawa trustees and former trustees.

One characteristic of several of those meetings was the scepticism with which members of the audience received information made available by the Project Leader. In addition to the materials available from Mrs. X, one of the parents from Coronation P.S. had obtained information on YRS from a friend in the United States. Their material included instances of schools in going back to the traditional calendar, after attempting modifications in the school year and citing poor achievement results, problems in finding appropriate day-care facilities, and general disruption of family life-styles and values. Perhaps the major point is that some of the parents publicly questioned the expertise of staff members.

The mistrust of the Board's intentions for YRS coalesced around the development of procedures for voting in the referendum. The questioning of the procedures ranged from the criteria for eligibility to vote through the security arrangements for the ballot box. A trustee on the Advisory Committee received an inquiry from a parent about the procedures for ensuring that the ballot boxes were empty before the first vote was cast. The procedures followed were those used in municipal voting and

included the appointment of a team of scrutineers for each school. Even the composition of the scrutineering team became as issue: one school did not even include a representative from the School Advisory Committee planning team.

5.9. THE VOTE

On the morning of Friday, May 9, each principal brought the sealed ballot box from his school to a large room in the staff Resource Centre in Whitby. Present were a number of trustees, members of the Advisory Committee, school scrutineers, the Board's Communications Manager and myself. While this process was new for the Board, there didn't appear to be the aura of excitement associated with an unknown, such as an election. There was probably no question in anyone's mind about the outcome, with the possible exception of the size of the positive vote at Hutchison P.S. Everybody believed that the process had been most successful at that small school.

Each principal and his entourage occupied a space around the large rectangular table. The ballots were individually counted and verified by the scrutineers. When all the ballots were counted, the following results were obtained:

	% of eligible ballots cast	% yes	% no
Athabasca Elementary P.S.	65	23.1	76.9
Coronation Elementary P.S.	72	24.0	76.0
R.A. Hutchison Elementary P.S.	81	47.0	53.0
West Lynde Elementary P.S.	81	23.3	76.7
Highbush Elementary P.S.	85	14.0	86.0

To no one's surprise the most support was received at Hutchison. One surprise was a similar low level of support at West Lynde as there was for the two Oshawa schools. As I have previously mentioned, the consultation process went very smoothly at West Lynde, but there was much opposition to the concept. Equally at both Coronation and Athabasca, the public process which brought out mostly negative responses, had masked support for YRS by about one quarter of the community.

The results at Highbush may have represented the fruits of the public hostility displayed at the public meetings. It was an indication of how the community felt about being singled out for the multi-track option with all its' complexities and threats to life-styles.

It is difficult to determine the differential support of staff versus parents in the vote, since there was no distinction made in the voting process. A good guess was that there was more support among staff than among parents. For the most part, there didn't seem to be a lot of interaction between staff and parents during the consultation process. In some schools there were rumours that some teachers might leave the school if YRS was accepted, and that some teachers were conveying that to their students. In a few cases this might have influenced some parents.

Making sense of this complicated story is the purpose of the next section. Perhaps an editorial from the Oshawa Times represents one view of why the story unfolded as it did: "Durham Board Gets Its Wish" (The Oshawa Times, Tuesday, May 12, 1992, p.8). The editorial begins with: "The Durham Board of Education set itself up for failure, and it got its wish", and it ends with: "This vote cannot be the end of the Durham Board's efforts to change the School year. There simply is no money to build more schools." However, what was certain was that there would be no support in Durham for YRS for at least the following year. These points will be explored as part of the analysis of the consultation process, the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS AND THE POLICY PROCESS

6.1. UNDERSTANDING THE DURHAM VOYAGE

The Durham Board of Education displayed courage and leadership in embarking upon this journey. It involved numerous people with a variety of interests and roles in a complicated democratic process of consultation. There are few areas of public policy-making where those who will be affected by change have a real say in the outcome. For the most part, DBE's consultation process followed the tenets of what we know from the literature as defined in Part Three of this report.

The combination of courageous leadership and an informed consultation process seem to belie the charge that the negative vote in the referendum was what the DBE wished for. However, the complexities associated with public policy making in an area associated with radical change rarely follows a totally smooth voyage. There were a number of events, circumstances and happenings which, I believe, contributed to the outcome, some of which could not have been predicted at the beginning of the process. However, there were a number of events that occurred which if a different course had been charted either in the original planning or if selected, mid-course corrections had been made, then a different, tentative ending might have been written for this story. (As shall become obvious, I deliberately refer to tentative ending because some of the problems facing DBE have not gone away and will require some further decision-making.) Of course, I have the luxury of making such speculations as part of a hot-house atmosphere - reality doesn't allow these speculations to be tested in the same way that DBE's YRS plans were subjected to temporal and political considerations.

What follows are a series of interpretations of parts of the voyage and an analysis of some of the reasons why the journey proceeded the way it did. Additionally, I suggest some alternative strategies that may be helpful for future decision-making, possibly in Durham and elsewhere. Some comments will also be addressed about what this study tells me about policy-making.

6.1.1. Sense of Purpose

The initial impetus for YRS in Durham centered around issues of space and accommodation, and possible cost-savings for a school board with current and projected population growth. Over the course of the consultation process, I believe that sense of purpose was forgotten in a concern for

community approval. The major arguments used for persuading communities by necessity were appeals to educational efficacy coupled with life-style advantages.

The first report commissioned by the Board "Year-Round Education: A Discussion Paper" introduced the concept by citing four "...issues which cause educators/the public to question the use of the September-June calendar" (Krawetz, 1989, p.1) changing life styles away from an agrarian focus, parents who take children out of school to accommodate vacation schedules, a growing student enrollment and lack of space, and growing financial constraints on funding educational programs. For the most part, these discussions were carried out within the YRS Steering Committee and the Program Committee of the Board. While the original focus may have been on physical and financial considerations, the two trustees most associated with YRS (Ruth Lafarga and Patti Bowman, who were members of both committees) came to realize the potential educational benefits, so that the discussion shifted to considering both types of benefits. In spite of this duality of interest, there was a perception widely shared across different levels of the system that the space, accommodation and cost factors were the prime reasons for considering YRS. Public signs of that perspective emanated from the Steering Committee. The June 1991 Report on YRS to the Program Committee included an Analysis section which stated:

> The decision to proceed with a modified school year pilot project must be based on information that includes the following:
>
> . enrollment projections
> . facilities analysis (availability and adequacy of space)
> . indicators of acceptance by parents, teachers and members of the community
> . financial data comparing the cost of the modified school year program with that of traditional programs
> . policies, plans and regulations relating to the operation of a modified school year (Walker, 1991)

Even more visible evidence of fostering the perception of space and cost savings was the development of the physical criteria for choosing schools as pilots. The emphasis on physical characteristics was not lost on people; the only non-physical criterion was Interest On The Part Of School Community, and this was added on after a lengthy process of selection involving the physical criteria. A point worth mentioning is that at least one of the physical criteria, Schools with Few Special Needs Pupils (probably referring to those not resident in the community who are bussed into the school), was at odds with some of the research evidence, i.e. the success of YRS with special needs students, that was publicly cited as part of the evidence for educational benefits.

The attempt to persuade community members about educational and life-style benefits moved dramatically away from issues that parents, staff and the community at large could understand, given the state of the economy, the financial pressures facing the Board, and indeed the taxpaying public.

If, the combination of space, accommodation and cost savings were consistently pursued as the major purposes for YRS, one strategy that could have been used was to only consider those schools which were either currently, or in the future, projected to have space and accommodation problems. After conducting an extensive consultation process in these schools, each community would then have the opportunity to self-select themselves into a further phase. This might enable the Board to plan by geographic region, allowing greater cost savings by not building new schools. But just considering modifications to the calendar may not be the only appropriate way to address the problems based on overcrowding and decreasing finances.

6.1.2. Not Enough Alternatives

Previously cited literature on the consultation process suggests that an important key to solving the problem (e.g., space and accommodation) is to generate and explore alternative solutions (McLain, 1973, p.172). In the case of DBE, there were several ways in which alternative solutions might have been considered. Although there was some discussion around split shifts with school day and bussing as other ways of coping with space and accommodation problems, they never became more than background to the major consideration of modifying the calendar. The issue in the referendum became one of acceptance or rejection of YRS, rather than one of trying to solve a problem. Unfortunately for one school - Highbush P.S. - the problem still remains and some solution will be needed in the near future.

One way in which alternatives could be addressed is to develop a consultation process in which the three (and any other) options were to be presented as equally viable solutions. If DBE was still committed to the referendum as a binding decision-making process, then the community would choose the most viable option for their situation. Alternatively if DBE wanted to make policy on a broader scale, school communities could be asked to rank the options, and treat the referendum results as non-binding for a particular school, but have data on several schools to plan on a regional basis. In discussing this strategy in my interviews, a number of informants expressed the opinion that YRS may have fared better if people were faced with choosing a solution. Still others believed that bussing the children of new residents in the community would have been a popular option. Most thought that the least desirable alternative was to break the school day into two shifts.

6.1.3. Ownership

A commonplace of successful policy implementation is for ownership of the innovation to reside with those who are involved in the process. In the extensive YRS process in Durham, a variety of groups - YRS Steering Committee, Senior Administration, Board members, principals, staff and parents of five schools as well as other staff and administrators of DBE, and the community-at-large were all involved either directly or indirectly. But, with the exceptions of the Steering Committee, including the Project Leader and Administrative Head of the project, and the principals, some staff and parents at two schools, few felt ownership of YRS as it emerged within DBE. The Steering Committee members were heavily involved in all phases of the project and had access to information on different aspects of YRS. Unfortunately there were those in the system who felt that the Committee appeared to be operating in a vacuum, without enough visibility and connectedness to the rest of the system (except perhaps the Board, especially since it reported to the Program Committee).

The four year consideration of YRS started with the previous Director of Education and was already in gestation when the current Director was hired. If of such a mind, she could have discouraged the process; instead she saw it as an innovative idea emanating from trustees that should be allowed to run its course. She was publicly supportive of the process, but at times may have had a different perspective than the steering committee on operational and organizational issues and the political waters in which YRS was floating. The other senior administrators, superintendents, were kept aware of the process through the Administrative Council, but support for the project was never officially voted upon by that body. The superintendents who became involved were those who had responsibility for schools in phase two but as a group there was no feeling of ownership.

Although for most of the Project, Trustees were unanimous in support of the concept, most never really got involved until the schools selection phase. It was seen as the special interest of a few trustees, and as such support was there in an abstract way. However, once specific schools were selected the political process came into play.

As a group, the five principals of the selected schools didn't feel as if they had ownership - partly due to the process of school selection but also because some were uncertain about either the concept itself or about the consultation process. Some thought that not enough information was made available, while others believed that the information available was appropriate for their needs. In those schools where the principals were comfortable with either the process or the concept, the process (if not the results) was successful. Those parents who were involved in the in-service were generally favourable and some encountered hostility in their communities for supporting the concept and/or the

process. The community-at-large had difficulty being involved in the process, in part because of the conflicting messages emanating from the media and from the Board (i.e., in its choice of schools) and because the community only became part of the process when six community members were added to the Advisory Committee at a very late stage in the proceedings.

6.1.4. Expertise

From the beginning, the DBE embarked upon an extensive process of information-gathering about YRS. Initially, the knowledgeable individuals were trustees Lafarga and Bowman. Soon Monica Krawetz, through her literature search and visits to YRS sites and conferences and subsequently as full time project leader, became the expert within DBE. She performed this role with intelligence and dignity; at times going beyond what a public employee should have to endure. Her responsibilities included running all the information sessions held inside and outside the Board and also preparing written materials for a variety of purposes. Her role was to be the resident expert on the topic and represent the concept to as many groups and individuals who were interested. Although these sessions and materials presented both sides of the story on YRS, it was widely acknowledged within the Board that the Project Leader was the spokesperson for the concept.

She worked in a liaison position with each of the five schools in Phase Two and made many presentations at the public information sessions, some of which I have already noted were quite stormy. Several observations are worth making about these meetings and expertise. First, the information presented was similar in content to that which had been made available for well over a year during the public consultation process. Second, this information, and by extension, the Board's expert was challenged publicly during these meetings. There were some individuals who believed that over the course of time, additional information, or perhaps more concrete data on research supporting YRS should have been presented. In fact, more concrete information was made available from recent studies. However, the net effect was for many to treat the material as part of a sales job for the Board.

What is at issue is perception of expertise and perhaps having the same person presenting similar information over the full process was self-defeating. Perhaps if the Board had used the services of an independent, university researcher during Phase Two, that person would have been "seen" by members of the respective school communities as being more objective and neutral, attributes of the scientist in the eyes of the public. Or, alternatively, if the Board already had in place the office of research services projected for next year, then research expertise might have been vested at different stages with different personnel.

6.1.5. A Team Approach

If there was a perception problem surrounding information expertise, it was not helped by ignoring other individuals in the Board who were expert in various aspects of YRS. One such team might have included staff from the business area to discuss issues of cost using phantom school projections developed by Brian Cain, Superintendent of Business, and staff from Planning who could address issues of space, accommodation, and alternative arrangements for parents opting out of YRS. This expertise was used for in-service sessions during Phase Two (with principals, trustees, SAC representatives and superintendents). Unfortunately, the decision to include in Phase Two mostly schools which were single track candidates took away the issues of space, accommodation and cost savings from consideration at most of the public meetings. If a team approach had been taken at Highbush P.S. it might have enabled a broader array of issues to be discussed in a more focused way, thereby diffusing the "shoot the messenger" mentality that prevailed at several of the meetings. A team approach might have included expertise from trustees, those responsible for the political decision-making. At some school meetings run by trustees with knowledge of the topic, the proceedings were better controlled. There was expertise about YRS on the Board, and perhaps one of the challenges might have been to spread that expertise beyond the few on the Board who were on the Advisory Committee.

6.1.6. Community Integrity and Premature Examples

I have already suggested that DBE was a pioneer in their belief in community involvement and decision-making. Central to this strategy was that each community was different and had to develop procedures and ultimately make decisions which fit their life-styles. The strategy of the YRS project was to consult widely, not presume to impose a solution on a community, and to keep options open until a school community committed itself to Phase Three, modifying their calendar. Two examples illustrate how this strategy may have worked against the consultation process. Broad-based consultation was conducted with different organizations for the important issues of day-care facilities and recreational activities. Many parents in Phase Two schools were concerned about the availability and adequacy of such facilities if calendar changes were made. While information about general consultation with these organizations was made available, no specifics about resources or commitments were part of the consultation process. This would await Phase Three.

Similarly, the strategy of the project was to give very general models when parents requested information about what a modified calendar would look like for a particular school. There was logic to this strategy, since any prematurely-imagined model would not have gone through the extensive negotiations required in Phase Three.

Nonetheless, a future consultation process might include some procedures for involving day-care and recreational agencies in a more specific way with a community so that these concerns won't be seen as so vague as to deter positive regard. Similarly, the process might include a strategy for collecting data and going through a mini-negotiation process so as to provide a community with one or more concrete examples of what a calendar might look like. The data used to inform the process might include information on job-related constraints, leisure time pursuits, and the constraints and possibilities associated with day-care and recreational facilities.

6.1.7. Timing and the Political Process

I have already called attention to the role of the 1991 Trustee election in transforming a relatively calm passage into a turbulent voyage. This highlights the reality that the consultation process in the DBE took longer than is generally seen as optimal for bringing about changes in the school calendar (1 1/2 - 2 years). The process in DBE ran for almost four years and given the timing of municipal elections in Ontario (every three years), it was bound to go through at least one political cycle. If the original timeline proposed had been achieved, i.e., decisions on choice of schools in spring and fall of 1991, one school with a modified calendar might have been planned before the election could have seriously affected the process.

The reality was that YRS became an election issue in Oshawa and the newly elected Board was less committed to the concept. With so many new members it became difficult to provide continuity with the previous Board. Perhaps obtaining commitment from the new board might have been possible if some version of cabinet solidarity was adopted. Although the situation was somewhat different in the adjacent York Region Board of Education, nonetheless the major role of the election in the interference to the consultation process brought about a similar conclusion. Once a Board designates potential schools as sites for YRS, the political process quickly becomes activated. Elections in the middle of the process are to be avoided if at all possible by planning around the political cycle.

6.1.8. The Advisory Committee

A number of features of the Advisory Committee bear some mention. Although DBE had some experience with widespread representation on committees, e.g., Family Life, the expanded Advisory Committee set a precedent for the Board. Such a committee can be seen in contradictory ways: it expands decision-making possibilities but at the same time makes for a potentially cumbersome consultation process. There is no guarantee that employing such a representative group ensures smooth communication even within constituent groups. If members are chosen as tokens for a particular group, and no real ownership develops, then a risk is run whereby superficial communication may occur. The consequence is that members of a constituency may see the Committee as isolated from the everyday system. This feeling of isolation can occur within the Advisory Committee if their expertise and judgement are not valued within the system. The reversal of the Advisory Committee's recommendations by the Program Committee and the full Board did much to undercut the Committee's feelings of efficacy.

The move to incorporate members of the community was done to signal a more public process of school involvement. However, this involvement should have taken place at the beginning of the planning stage, so that potential community support could be established early in the process, as one way of deterring some of the fickleness of the political system.

6.1.9. The Future of YRS in Durham

I have stated that the results of the referendum do not signify the solution to some of the concerns of space, accommodation and finances. Earlier some suggestions were offered about how the consultation process might have been structured differently to accommodate these concerns. There are two alternatives for considering YRS which are being suggested within DBE which merit attention. Neither have official sanction but represent innovative approaches.

The YRS Advisory Committee has drafted a report on the project which includes a recommendation that the next new school to be built (excepting those already in the construction phase) should be designated as YRS. Presumably this would be in an area of new development and that parents would have enough time and the advantage of a consultation process to decide whether they voluntarily send their children to the school. Similarly, future staff would be recruited from among those who volunteer for the experiment.

A second alternative was suggested by one staff member and takes advantage of the proximity of schools to each other, the conversion of schools from K-6 to K-8, and the elimination of the concept of intermediate schools (Grades 7-8). In areas where several schools in the same geographic area are changed to K-8, and that feed into an intermediate school relatively contiguous in boundary with them, that former intermediate school could be designated as YRS. This would allow parents in the surrounding schools the choice of schools based on calendar within a short distance of one another. If this were possible, then the Board would have to commit themselves to an experimental trial for a period of time, perhaps three years.

CHAPTER 7

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND POLICY-MAKING

To this point, this report has considered issues about consultation in the context of one area for policy-making, and mostly in one jurisdiction. In this chapter, I wish to broaden the perspective and address some of my impressions which may be of interest to other Boards contemplating YRS or other innovation. Indeed, these comments can be viewed as being of interest to any public policy decision-making situation in which a consultation process may be appropriate. Some of these comments could be construed as suggesting ways for improving the consultation process while others are posed as dilemmas, i.e., perhaps pitfalls, in which uncertainty plays a central role. Indeed, at the end I raise a fundamental question about the role of indeterminacy in the planning and decision-making processes. Although the DBE case study provides the most extensive data, I also draw from the experiences of the four other Boards mentioned earlier.

7.1. INVOLVING CONSTITUENTS

By definition, democratic societies encourage participation by the public. Often this participation occurs through special interest groups, each espousing a particular interest or cause. As many traditions of our society, such as those associated with employment, the family, or being a Canadian, are undergoing change, individuals are increasingly taking an active role in either demanding change or a return to tradition. Public mistrust of politicians and public servants seems to be at an all time high. This was clearly visible in DBE, where many parents would not take at face value that the Board would abide by the results of the vote. Perhaps the public has not had enough experience with such direct democratic procedures.

Radical changes in an institution, such as modifying the school calendar has implications for so many features of people's lives. When is it reasonable to expect that others beyond those in schools should be involved in the consultation process? Who should be included, and in what ways? There are different purposes for involving constituents in a consultation process: communication, planning, and decision-making. The communication purpose is illustrated by public meetings held in schools and other means such as newsletters and information given to media, in order to provide information about a proposed idea, such as YRS. Constituents can also be involved in the planning associated with an idea; an example would be the involvement of selected parents in developing procedures for

consultation in their community. Participation in decision-making, that is when members of the public have the right to determine the fate of change, happens less frequently. At a broad level, the recent referendum on Constitutional change is such an example, and the referendums held in the five schools in Durham are examples at a local level of public decision-making in schools.

How was the public involved in YRS consultation in the five Boards? Although information was available to the public through meetings at schools and through the media, first-hand involvement by public constituents in planning and decision-making was employed in later stages of the consultation process in York, Halton, and even Durham, where it occurred only after the five schools were chosen. Muskoka involved a member of the public and a representative of the local recreation agency in their early stages of considering YRS. Peel's committee was strictly in-house, as was those for York and the original Durham Steering Committee. It is difficult to predict whether inclusion of community members would have made a difference in the outcomes for either Durham or York. How is one to gauge whether having parents on York's committee would have been a palliative to the publication of the Toronto Star article, an event which altered the course of York's consultation process. Similarly, would parent and community membership on Durham's original Steering Committee have made a difference in the ways that school communities reacted to the consequences of modifying school calendars.

7.2. DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

When DBE did involve community constituents, they did so in an unusual way. It is rare for a public agency to include real decision-making for its clients in the consultation process. This strategy indicates that they were aware that one of the criteria that have become commonplace in successful implementation of social change is to involve those who will either implement and/or be affected by the change. By creating an open process of information-giving, planning and decision-making, DBE was following the theoretical course to successful implementation. However, as DBE discovered, an open consultation process does not always lead to the decision to implement. The more open the public process, the more risk gets taken that the process cannot be controlled, or at least, managed effectively. Potentially, there are so many other issues that may obscure the decision-making process, that it may be difficult to get a true reading of the wishes of the clientele. For example, in York, it is possible that YRS was but one issue associated with a wider political agenda being played out by Board Trustees. In DBE, the problem may have been different, rather than an external agenda altering the process, perhaps the confusion surrounding the sense of purpose and inappropriate use of expertise may have hindered the ability of DBE to get the proper information to parents.

7.3. REFERENDUM AS PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGY

If constituents from the public are to be involved with decision-making, then holding a referendum may be the most democratic procedure in the consultation process. Of course, this is dependent upon the openness of the procedures used to inform those who will vote. The quality of the result is also predicted upon the way in which the referendum question is phrased. I have already suggested that in DBE, the referendum question spoke only to one option, that of modifying the calendar, and that may have been a strategic mistake. A referendum should probably be used in a problem-solving context, where several options are offered, but that one or several choices must be made. Although in some situations it should be appropriate to decide upon the status quo, in other settings changes to existing policy may be necessary. In DBE, the options of bussing and split shifts would have sharply focused the decision. In such cases where more than two options are offered, a preferential ballot would be in order, in which voters rank order their preferences.

7.4. WHO VOTES

One of the dilemmas in trying to include constituents in the consultation process is the definition of constituent. A case could be made that any situation in which public funds are at issue should include all taxpayers, not just those immediately involved in the change process. This may not be difficult when the purpose is communication - an entire community is often informed through press releases and media coverage. When the purposes of the consultation process move to planning and decision-making phases, it becomes more difficult to be so inclusive. In the planning stage, for example, members of the community might be included on the Advisory Committee, as was the case in Muskoka, and in the later stages of the Durham process. The real dilemma occurs in deciding upon who should vote in the referendum. In the DBE context, the decision was taken to include all staff and families of children who would be enroled in the school when calendar modifications would take effect. There were a number of people who believed that all taxpaying families in the school jurisdiction (i.e., those who assign their taxes to the Public School System) should be included in the vote. While changes in calendar would directly affect families within the school, it can also be seen that other taxpayers are affected by the possibility of cost savings/spending and by changes in other institutions (e.g. leisure and recreation organizations) which might directly affect their lives. It is possible that in situations involving cost savings, taxpayers not involved in the school might have a different perspective and hence vote differently than those more directly involved.

7.5. CRITERION OF ACCEPTANCE IN REFERENDUM

n addition to how a referendum question is posed, a decision has to be made as to what constitutes an acceptable result. Both the posing of the question and determining the criterion of acceptance are matters of interpretation. As seen in DBE, the level for acceptance became a substantive matter, as seen in the deliberations of the Advisory Committee, and of the principals in the five referendum schools. You may recall that the original plan from the Advisory Committee was a complicated formula involving at least 50% of eligible voters, and the principals wanted an 80% acceptance rate. At issue was the tension between mustering as much support as possible to ensure that an innovation has a chance to succeed, and what constitutes majority rights in a democratically held vote. When the final decision was made by the Board of Trustees, the issue had become highly political, with opponents of YRS prevailing in a vote for a 75% acceptance level for each school.

There are good arguments on both sides of this issue as I have earlier suggested in this chapter. Should politicians, i.e. Trustees, hold any question to a higher standard than what they are held to in their own election. On the other side, the more support shown for change should increase the likelihood for successful implementation. Perhaps one way to reconcile the two positions is to have a suggested acceptance criterion, but apply it differentially depending upon circumstances in each situation. The Calgary Board of Education in its deliberations about YRS has set an 80% approval level for community acceptance; however, in one new community where 57% approval was determined in a referendum, the Board is not arbitrarily invoking its own criterion. The grass roots involvement in the community is being respected, and planning continues for YRS in a school which will already be overcrowded when it opens its doors.

7.6. CENTRALIZED VS DECENTRALIZED DECISION-MAKING

One tension associated with policy-making is the determination of where policy change is initiated, and ultimately decided. For both Durham and York, the policy initiatives were at the Board level, and in both cases, for perhaps somewhat different reasons and with different strategies, the result was not to proceed with the change. In Halton, the grass roots staff initiative at General Brock Secondary School would seem to be an example of a successful consultation process. Parents and community members were brought into the picture very late in the process. You may recall that the first YRS in Canada, Glendale Public School in Williams Lake, BC, was initiated by staff and parents in the community. There is the potential tension associated with local ownership of an innovation, and seeing the 'big picture' for the larger jurisdiction. Part of the dilemma for YRS, as perhaps for other innovations, is that a change in one area influences other areas (e.g., the relationship between feed-

and receiver schools). There are some policy-making situations where not considering a systems approach could lead to unnecessary political trouble. However, as we see in the York example, consideration of feeder and receiver schools was overshadowed by the political forces at work in the whole region.

7.7. AVOIDING POLITICAL NOISE

Public policy-making doesn't occur in a vacuum: it can be influenced by other features of the political landscape. Perhaps the most vivid illustration could be found in the recent referendum on Constitutional change. There were so many competing signals which may have influenced the course of the vote that a complete understanding of the results would be difficult. In York, the issue of YRS was compounded with larger political issues surrounding the Board and the Administration, and in Durham, the ripple effect from York caused a delay in decision-making at what I believe was a crucial point in the process. In both situations, the YRS consultation process overlapped with the election of new Boards. Unless part of the consultation strategy is to use an election as a form of referendum, decision-makers take the risk of the process being over-shadowed and/or over-run by other events. To put it bluntly, plan around major events, such as civic and other elections.

7.8. PAST LAURELS AND MAKING CHANGE

The question, "What have you done for me recently?" may have as little relevance in public policy-making as it does in baseball negotiations. It is important for a public institution to cultivate good working relationships with its clientele. Among the attributes contributing to schools being recognized as effective is the meaningful involvement of parents in the life of the school. Highbush Elementary School in Durham has had an exemplary reputation for community relations. This previous excellent rapport between parents and school did not guarantee a smooth process of consultation over YRS. When a controversial change is being contemplated, very little should be taken for granted. Past performance does not necessarily guarantee future success.

7.9. OWNERSHIP WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

Successful public policy-making not only requires ownership from the public clientele, but also from those within the organization. With an innovation such as YRS, the consultation process should

include representatives from diverse groups within the Board. For the most part, this was achieved in Durham, York and Peel. However, consultation involving representatives from different constituencies also does not guarantee ownership of the innovation. There should be clear-cut procedures for the representatives of a group to communicate with their constituencies to both inform and motivate.

Another way of building a sense of ownership is to develop a team approach in the consultation process. The conception of expertise should be broad-based, providing different kinds of knowledge and skills, as well as a positive face for political purposes. A team approach which reflects intelligent, dedicated commitment to the idea will usually be more effective than one which relies upon a fairly narrow band of expertise.

7.10. SUPPORT FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The School Boards discussed in this report have experimented with considering YRS as one strategy in coping with a variety of financial and accommodation problems. These are troubling times for public institutions, given the reality of government funding caps and public calls for more and improved services. At least in one example (Muskoka), it is likely that if there had been seed monies available from the Ministry of Education, at least one pilot project on YRS might have materialized. (It would be difficult to predict what the effects of having Ministry of Education financial support for start-up costs in Durham and York would have had on their consultative processes.)

Given the difficulties of the government in allocating scarce resources, it would seem prudent for the Ministry of Education (MOE) to experiment with ways of realizing future cost savings and the deliverance of programs. If fewer resources are available for capital construction costs, then incentives should be made available for school boards attempting innovations around YRS. Perhaps this could take the form of additional resources for employing innovative consultation arrangements.

7.11. PLANNING AND UNCERTAINTY

Two general points seem clear from the cases involving the experiences of the Durham Board and the York Region Board with YRS. First, that each Board had a general plan from the beginning and developed a very extensive consultation process as part of its decision-making. Second, in spite of having a plan informed in part by the past experiences found in the YRS literature, the results were not what was expected at the beginning of the process.

In this part of the report, I wish to discuss the discrepancy between the predicted course of policy-making and the reality of what happened. The previous sections of this and the previous chapter suggested some concrete reasons for the results. From this it is possible to interpret that both Durham and York could have done things differently, therefore leading to a different result. That may be too simple an explanation, since public policy-making is fraught with numerous indeterminacies, that is, it is difficult to predict with certainty what a particular course of action might bring. Again, the context may be YRS, but the perspective in this section is to view the consultation process with a wider lens, making it appropriate to more general concerns.

Policy-making is involved with situations that can be characterized as uncertain practical problems. According to Reid (1979), uncertain practical questions rely less upon procedural solutions, i.e., using a suitable formula or technique, and more on an interactive consideration of means and ends. Policy-making about YRS very neatly fits the characteristics of uncertain practical questions:

1. it requires an answer, even if the decision is not to do anything;

2. nothing can tell us infallibly whose interests should be consulted, what evidence can be considered, or the kinds of arguments advanced over others;

3. some existing state of affairs is usually taken into consideration; fresh starts may not be possible;

4. each question is unique to time, context, etc. and the particulars can never be exhaustively described;

5. there will be competing goals and values to be adjudicated;

6. the outcome can never be predicted with certainty;

7. the grounds on which we decide upon to answer the question are not grounds that point to the desirability of the action but of the desired state of affairs brought about by the action, (eg., YRS may not have been accepted, but experience with a democratic consultative process was a major outcome).

This is not an unfamiliar state of affairs. In matters small and large, of state and the personal, of the mind and of the heart, how often do intentions get realized in a predictable way. We have become accustomed, if not accepting, of social programs and policies falling far short of promising beginnings, whether it be debt reduction or new innovations for schools. In such situations, we always expect that rational thinking or planning will have a predictable effect. There are limits to reason, as the description of uncertain practical questions suggests. Eisenberg's (1992) theory of social indeterminacy maintains that a fundamental indeterminacy infecting all social understanding hinders the likelihood of determining the specific outcomes of both social programs and policies. It may be less so for the decision-making leading to social programs and policies.

One way of thinking about the planning process is to consider whether an event could be anticipated and whether the effects of the event are modifiable. Figure One provides a two dimensional representation of this conception, with Anticipated/Not Anticipated and Modifiable/Non-modifiable dimensions.

FIGURE 1 PLANNING AND UNCERTAINTY

		EFFECTS	
		MODIFIABLE	NON-MODIFIABLE
E V E N T	ANTICIPATED		
	NOT ANTICIPATED		

In concrete terms, for some of the examples of the YRS policy-making process there were a number of events or actions which might have been predicted or anticipated, but there were other features of the process which could not have been anticipated. Examples of the former would be the timing of the Trustee election, which was a fixed event known during the whole of the policy-making process. What was not predictable at the beginning of the process in Durham was the action that would be taken by a key trustee not to seek re-election. Another event that could not be predicted is

the role of Mrs. X. in calling attention to the negative features of YRS. Each of these instances may have had an influence on the consultation process, but the complexities make it difficult to make a direct link. Additionally, it is difficult in Durham, to determine the influence on public perceptions of the negative decision about YRS, prior to the Trustee election, by the York Region Board. To what extent did the announcement by a major employer in Oshawa, General Motors, of future plant closings in North America, have on the receptivity to change by community members?

In some instances, events could not have been anticipated, but potentially modifiable within the consultation process. An example of this in Durham was the appearance of Mrs. X. and her materials, which could be countered by providing appropriate responses (and materials). Or for another, the interview of a York trustee published in the Toronto Star, which triggered the necessity to develop ad hoc procedures to counter the public's reactions. There are other events, such as the General Motors announcement, which neither could be anticipated nor controlled within the consultation process. Of course, there are also those things which might have been anticipated in advance, but because they weren't, became difficult to modify. A primary example in Durham would be the shift in purpose from space, accommodation and cost considerations to other purposes requiring a more complex process of consultation in order to communicate about the effects on educational program and life-style.

The development of policy to institute changes to prevailing practices has to consider several processes: making the decision to change, developing procedures for implementation, and finally implementing the change(s). With the exception of some material on implementation contained in the Background section of Part One of this report, I have concentrated on discussion, procedures and research related to the consultation process. At the very least, this illustrates the complexities of policy-making, since all of these activities, events and resources were part of a pre-implementation phase. The results of the extensive processes employed in Durham and York resulted in decisions not to move to an implementation process. Even if either or both of these Boards had a different outcome, there would still be no guarantee of success at the implementation phase. However, to the extent that consultation procedures are necessary in implementation activity as well, a sound consultation process at an earlier stage might provide a base for successful further work. What I have attempted to provide are some features of the consultation process which might be considered for future decision-making situations. While no two decision-making contexts are ever the same, it is possible to gain some understanding of those features which may be helpful, and those which might provide pitfalls, in future considerations. Decision-making involves people making decisions in, and about, institutions. It is that intersection of people and institutions which has to be considered in developing a successful consultation process. To the extent that being informed is usually preferential to being mis-informed or not informed, the research reported on in this report may be of assistance

to those who are contemplating policy surrounding change. Perhaps the stories of the consultation processes will allow us to understand more about the inter-relatedness of changing times and changing minds in any policy-making situation.

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PART THREE

CHAPTER 8

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY ON YRS

YRS's long history has been characterized by diverse and extensive writings. Many books, monographs, articles, and reports are available from a variety of areas. The popularity of YRS shows waxing and waning periods; that is, identifiable cycles based on perceived problems such as overcrowding and lack of funds. Most interpretations cite William Wirt's 1907 article, "A School Year of Twelve Months", as the first influential writing. Since the writings are so extensive, this bibliography contains six categories. In some cases, we indicate material which fits into more than one category with a plus sign. An asterisk designates Canadian materials. Many of these sources have been compiled from other bibliographies that are available elsewhere, especially from the National Association for Year-Round Education. In the spirit of a free exchange of information, we have borrowed from those who have travelled this road before and we have added materials where appropriate.

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Appendix A:

Letter of Permission

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6

Institut d'études pédagogiques de l'Ontario
252, rue Bloor Ouest, Toronto (Ontario) M5S 1V6

Department of Curriculum
Département de curriculum

June, 1992

Dear

I am conducting a case study for the Durham Board of Education on the consultation process involved in their activities around the modified school year pilot project. The research is being sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Education because of their interest in the ways that public agencies consult in their decision-making situations. I will be interviewing a number of individuals about this project.

You have been contacted because you are knowledgeable on the topic under study. Participation by the Durham Board of Education and funding for the research by the Ministry of Education do not mean that you are under any obligation to participate in the study. For this reason, I should like to obtain your personal consent to participate in the study. Your personal views will be kept entirely confidential. If you do not accept to participate, no information on your decision will be provided to any person.

Thank you for your attention. Please sign the attachment in the relevant space to indicate your agreement or non-agreement to participate.

Yours Sincerely,

Joel Weiss

(SEE REVERSE)

Statement of consent or refusal

_____ **Yes, I agree to participate See additional questions below.**

_____**No, I do not wish to participate. I understand that my refusal to participate will be kept confidential.**

Additional questions for persons agreeing to participate:

As stated above, I agree to participate and:

_____ I wish all my commentaries to be kept confidential. My comments are for background information only. My participation will be kept confidential.

or

_____ I consent to have the researchers make reference to my comments in publications, provided the comments are used anonymously and cannot be used to identify me as the source. My participation will be kept confidential.

or

_____ I want my opinions to be publicly known and attributed to me *[strike out following if desired:]* except for times during the interviews when I clearly indicate to you that some portion of my comments are to be kept confidential. My participation will NOT be kept confidential.

_____

(signature)

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Appendix B:

Modified School Year
Capital Considerations
&
Costing as at June 30, 1991

Modified School Year

Capital Considerations

	School "A" 4-Track	School "A" 5-Track	School "B" 4-Track	School "B" 5-Track
Classroom Reduction	6	4	4	3
Reductions				
(a) Portable Reduction 1991 Allocation - $38,250.	$229,500.	$153,000.	$153,000.	$114,750.
(b) Replacement Cost -1991 - $100 per sq. ft.	$450,000.	$300,000.	$300,000.	$225,000.
-Furniture and Equipment @ $7,200.	43,200.	28,800.	28,800.	21,600.
	$493,200.	$328,800.	$328,800.	$246,600.
(c) Phantom School -a 14 instructional classroom reduction = one school equivalent to the un-named Pickering Beach P.S. @ Site			$3,564,000. 1,501,000.	$5,065,000.
-Operating cost Reduction - Principal - Vice Principal - Secretary - Utilities (entire school) - Maintenance				
Additional				
(a) Renovation (Air Conditioning)	$375,000.	$375,000.	$150,000.	$150,000.

M8/21

Modified School Year
Costing as at June 30, 1991

	School "A" - (K-6)			School "B" - (K-8)		
	Traditional	4-Track	5-Track	Traditional	4-Track	5-Track
Student Population	729			683		
Number of Classrooms	30	24	26	28	24	25
Operating Days	194	250	235	194	250	235
VARIABLE EXPENSES FOR YRE						
1. Additional						
(a) Salaries and Benefits						
(1) Administrative	$42,840.	$31,365.		$42,840.	$31,365.	
(2) Secretarial/Clerical	8,903.	7,123.		8,903.	7,123.	
(3) Custodial	256.	102.		256.	102.	
(b) Utilities - Heating 1 week (est. 10% diff.)	15.	16.		15.	16.	
- Air Conditioning (est. $21.p/room)	1,512.	1,229.		1,512.	1,181.	
(c) Maintenance (labour premium)	10,000.	-		10,000.	-	
Annual Operating Cost increase	$ 63,526.	$ 39,835.		$ 63,526.	$ 39,787.	
2. Reductions						
(a) Operating Costs - $2,195. per class	$ 13,170.	$ 8,780.		$ 13,170.	$ 6,585.	
(b) Maintenance (2% of Capital cost)	9.000.	6,000.		9,000.	4,500.	
Annual Operating Cost Reduction	$ 22,170.	$ 14,780.		$ 22,170.	$ 11,085.	
NET ANNUAL OPERATING COST INCREASE	$ 41,356.	$ 25,055.		$ 41,356.	$ 28,702.	
3. Project Leader						$ 64,000.

4. Areas of Consideration

(a) Teachers in Specialized Areas
- -Instrumental Music
- -Design Technology
- -Family Studies

-consider (1) additional existing staff qualified in these areas
(2) "semestering"
(3) Existing qualified staff fill itinerate roles
(4) Flex instructional hours

(b) Resource Staff -Program
-Special Education

-consider (1) proportional number of resource staff on a 4/5 track year
(2) flex instructional/hours

(c) Transportation

-fewer buses utilized over a longer school year

(d) Administrative Costs - payroll
- support staff

5. Cost Neutral Areas

Teacher Salaries/Benefits
Instructional Supplies
Textbooks
Instructional Capital
Excursion/Field Trips
Ground costs

*(these may generate block budget efficiencies with the need for
*(fewer texts and/or equipment utilized over a longer school year.

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Appendix C:

Draft to Steering Committee
Suggested Timeline - Modified School Year

DRAFT

SUGGESTED TIME LINE

MODIFIED SCHOOL YEAR

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1991

Modified School Year Steering Committee reviews criteria used in the completion of the cost analysis for the June report to the Board.

Revised criteria are presented to the Property and Transportation Committee of the DBE.

The criteria are used to generate a list of schools that could become pilot projects using a modified calendar.

A protocol for communicating with staff, parents and community members and for determining the level of support for the pilot project is determined.

A list of schools that meet the criteria is reviewed by the steering committee and a short-list is created.

Information and awareness sessions for interested staff and community groups continue.

NOVEMBER/MARCH 1992

1992 Budget Proposal for the project is submitted for consideration.

Following the protocol developed by the steering committee, meetings are held within the school communities to determine which schools will become the pilot projects.

Information sessions with interested Durham groups and others continue to be held.

Results of school votes are reported to trustees and a recommendation for the implementation of a modified school year pilot project at the identified schools is passed.

APRIL/JUNE 1992

Calendar options are reviewed by staff and parent committees. Input from teachers, parents, students and community agencies is requested.

Consultation with the Ministry of Education continues.

A calendar is presented to the parents, staff, community and the board.

Calendar is submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval.

Discussions with support staff (consultants, custodial, secretarial, maintenance and transportation) for successful implementation of the project and continued equity of program for students continues.

Staffing of pilot schools is finalized

SEPTEMBER/DECEMBER 1992

School based, teacher committees are planning curriculum adjustments, are scheduling and organizing facility use.

Evaluation plan for the program is developed.

Information meetings and awareness sessions continue to be held.

JANUARY/JUNE 1993

School site meetings are held to discuss class lists, staff inservice, room preparation, opening day plans, newsletters, communication and maintenance.

Approved school calendar is sent home to parents and other interested ratepayers.

Simple registration forms are completed and class lists are finalized.

JULY/AUGUST 1993

Pilot schools open with a modified school year calendar.

Printed on recycled paper